

JOURNAL  
OF  
JOSEPH EDGERTON.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

*Chap.*

BX 7795

*Shelf*

E 35 A3

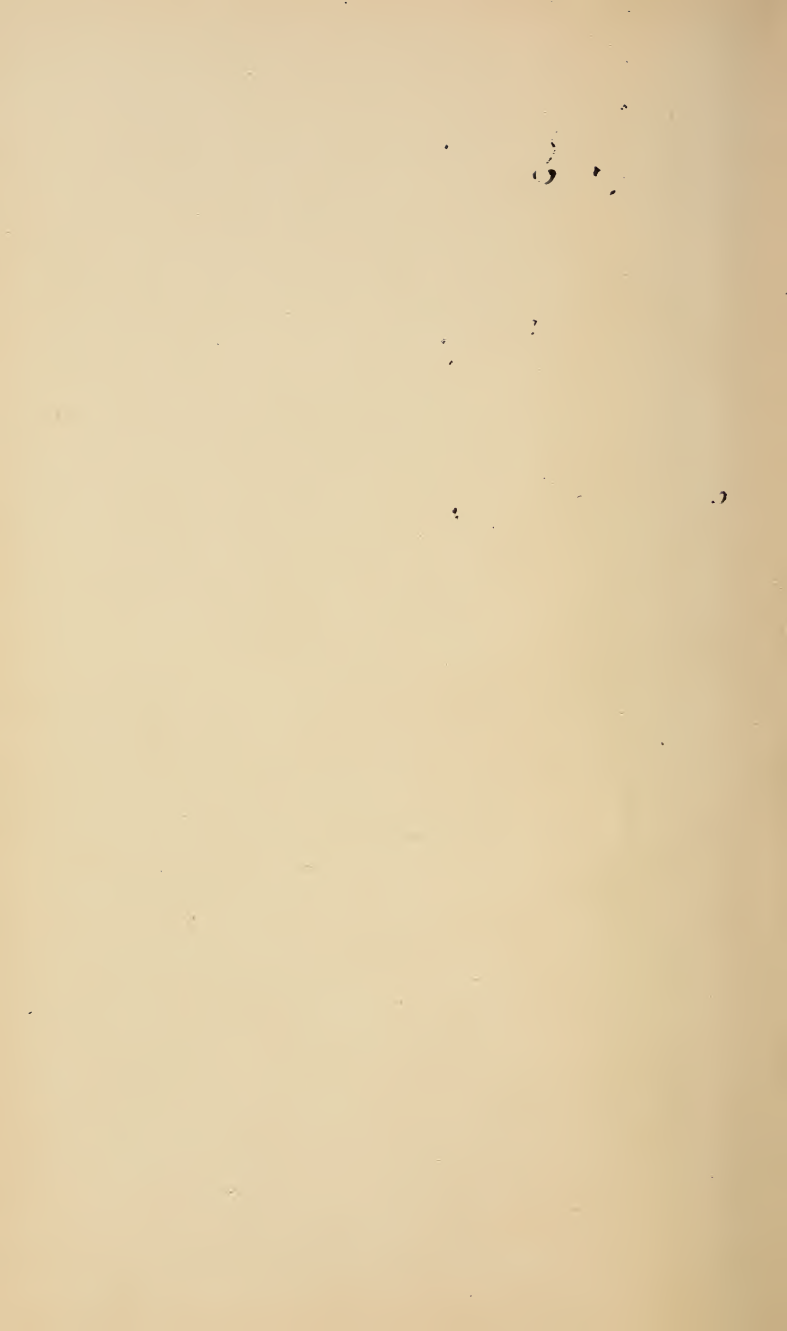
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.











# SOME ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE AND RELIGIOUS SERVICES

OF

✓  
JOSEPH EDGERTON,

A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,

WITH EXTRACTS FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE.

---

COMPILED FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS BY HIS DAUGHTER  
EUNICE THOMASSON.

---

PHILADELPHIA:   
WILLIAM H. PILE, PRINTER.

1885.  
S

BX7795  
E35A3

At a Meeting for Sufferings of Ohio Yearly Meeting held at Stillwater, Belmont County, Ohio, Fifth Month 26th, 1885.

The committee who have had in care the manuscript writings of Joseph Edgerton, an approved minister of the Gospel in the Society of Friends, after a careful examination thereof, were united in producing the following:—The meeting directs the committee to have such number of volumes published as in their judgment would be proper.

Taken from the Minutes.

JOHN W. SMITH, *Clerk.*





# CONTENTS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Early Life and Labors in the Ministry, . . . . . 9

## CHAPTER II.

Visit to North Carolina Yearly Meeting, . . . . . 17

## CHAPTER III.

Visit to Indiana Yearly Meeting, . . . . . 36

## CHAPTER IV.

Visit to the Yearly Meetings of Philadelphia, New York  
and New England; extending to New Brunswick and  
Nova Scotia, . . . . . 56

## CHAPTER V.

Account of a Religious Visit to Indiana Yearly Meeting  
and some of its Branches, . . . . . 102

## CHAPTER VI.

Account of a Religious Visit to New York, Canada, and  
Philadelphia, taking Baltimore Yearly Meeting on the  
way, . . . . . 109

## CHAPTER VII.

Account of a visit to Salem and Springfield Quarterly  
Meetings, and their Branches, . . . . . 140

## CHAPTER VIII.

Account of a visit within the limits of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1844 ; which concern extended to New England ; for which service he was liberated by his friends at home ; but owing to the well-known difference in our Society on points of Doctrine, which then existed there, the prosecution of his concern was opposed ; to which he submitted, in accordance with disciplinary order, and left his burden with them, . . . . .	146
--	-----

## CHAPTER IX.

Account of a visit to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and its Branches, . . . . .	162
---	-----

## CHAPTER X.

Account of a visit to the families of Chesterfield Monthly Meeting, and the meetings of Redstone Quarter, . . . .	168
---	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

Account of a visit to the Meetings belonging to North Carolina Yearly Meeting, . . . . .	172
--	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

Account of a visit to the Meetings of Redstone, Short-creek, Salem and Springfield Quarterly Meetings, . . . .	185
--	-----

## CHAPTER XIII.

Account of a visit to some of the Meetings of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting ; appointed some meetings in New England, and in some of the seaport towns, . . . . .	192
---	-----

## CHAPTER XIV.

Account of a visit to the meetings of Redstone, Salem and Springfield Quarterly Meetings, . . . . .	204
---	-----

CONTENTS.

vii

CHAPTER XV.

PAGE.

Testimony of Somerset Monthly Meeting, . . . 221

CHAPTER XVI.

Address to the Members of the Society of Friends, . . . 228



# JOURNAL OF JOSEPH EDGERTON.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY LIFE AND LABORS IN THE MINISTRY.

It has been on my mind to leave some account of the gracious dealings of my Heavenly Father with me from my youth, which have been many, and eminently marked with his unbounded love towards me, for my gathering into the fold of everlasting rest.

I was born the 10th day of the Ninth Month, 1797, in Wayne County, North Carolina, of pious parents, members of our religious Society, James and Sarah Edgerton, whose godly care over their numerous family was blest to us. My father filled the station of an elder for many years to the satisfaction of his friends. He was a loving husband and a tender father; and his heart and house were ever open to receive the messengers of the glad tidings of the gospel of peace, giving up cheerfully divers times to accompany such in the work whereunto they were called.

In the year 1805, my father removed with his family to the State of Ohio, and settled in Belmont County, which, being a new country, many privations and hardships were our portion. Religious meetings were remote,

but through all, a consistent example was maintained in the attendance of both First and week-day meetings.

In the fore part of the Twelfth Month, 1824, he was taken ill of what proved to be asthma. He uttered many sweet and heavenly expressions, saying at one time, "Tell all my dear friends who may inquire after me, that I die in peace." Thus he continued in a lively frame of mind until the 21st of First Month, 1825, when he quietly departed this life in the 61st year of his age, leaving the solemn impression: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

But to return to my own account. Being sheltered by pious parental care, I was preserved from many of the follies and vanities which young people are too frequently drawn into, and was early visited by the day-spring from on high. Once as I was at my innocent play, my mind was secretly turned to meditate upon divers of the patriarchs, such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, how the Lord blessed them; with the impression that if I would be good and serve Him, I should be his servant; accompanied by a desire that He who is thus gracious to the children of men, might by his watchful care over me keep me from evil.

The families of Friends where my father settled were scattered, and the meetings, of course, at a distance from some of the members, being five miles from us. We generally attended twice a week, and I became attached to walking, as I thought it better suited to silent meditation; and many sweet seasons I had in going and returning from them. Convinced I am, that if our beloved young people were more concerned to retire into the closet of their own



hearts, they would experience preservation from so close an attachment to the vanities of the world ; and the good hand of Israel's Shepherd would be turned upon them, preparing them for the service of this day, and their final acceptance with Him in the world to come.

Thus I grew up, and though, as I have before stated, I was preserved from many of the follies and vanities incident to youth, yet many times I deviated from the monitions of that witness for God which cannot be removed into a corner, one of which was as follows : Being questioned concerning one of my elder brothers, relative to the subject of marriage, I, in order to screen him, answered in the negative, which was a deviation from the truth, and occasioned bitter remorse and condemnation. I have often been struck when I have observed in others a similar deviation in regard to this subject, and I have thought it would be much better to withhold entirely than to deviate from the truth with a view to secrecy ; He with whom we have to do being always present, sees and weighs our words and actions as well as thoughts. O that the children of men would receive the reproofs of instruction, and be wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil, that their peace might be as a river and their righteousness as a mighty stream.

I was early impressed with the danger of associating with persons of light, irregular conduct, and felt the pure witness rise against joining in company with them. I was, however, preserved from much desire therefor ; having felt the sweet incomes of Divine love to my soul, quietness and retirement were very desirable to me ; and at the presentation of danger of falling into such company, I was brought into much exercise, crying unto the Lord for preservation ; and He was pleased by his secret hand to guide

and guard my youthful steps. My heart is at this time filled with thanksgiving and praise unto Him who was pleased to care for me in early life, bringing me to see and understand his blessed will concerning me, and has been pleased to carry on the work in the way that He has chosen, even in the way of the cross; bringing me to see my lost and undone condition without Him; that it was through his everlasting love to my soul that He was pleased to visit me in the waste howling wilderness of my natural state, and draw me to his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only way to eternal glory. My soul bows in awful reverence before Him, because of his loving kindness in leading me about and instructing me in the path of self-denial. May He be pleased to carry on his work until all the dross, the tin, and even the reprobate silver may be removed, together with the strong will of the creature, that is so much opposed to the government of Immanuel; that He may subdue all things unto himself, even every thought, to that obedience wherein He comes to rule and reign over all.

I was preserved in a good degree in plainness, not having, to my recollection, deviated from plain Scripture language at any time; and as to deportment and apparel, I was not suffered to deviate far from the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus. And although I often found myself very deficient in faithfully observing the monitions of the witness for God, yet He was pleased to pass by my disobedience and renew his favors to me, causing his peace to flow into my heart. Often on lying down at night his love has distilled into my quiet habitation, and strength has been given through the pouring forth of the spirit of grace and of supplication, to give thanks for past and

present favors, and to intercede for a continuance thereof, before closing my eyes for sleep.

In the 19th year of my age, the Lord was pleased to show me in a meeting at Captina, where I belonged, that if I were faithful I should have to declare to others what He had done for my soul, at which I was broken into tenderness even to tears, feeling, indeed, as a child for that great work. In the 21st year of my age, I was married to Charity, daughter of John and Miriam Doudna, an amiable and pious young woman, and we settled at Ridge, near Barnesville, Belmont County, Ohio.

Being in limited circumstances, we found it necessary to labor diligently for sustenance for ourselves and family; nevertheless a desire prevailed at times that I might not suffer even the things we stood in need of to gain the first place in my seeking, fully believing in the promise of our Holy Redeemer, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

I was often brought to feel something of what I had felt some years before in regard to appearing in the ministry, but nature shrunk from it time after time, even after the impression was so clear that there could be no excuse; yet how did I plead to be excused until his judgments, in deep distress of mind, were poured upon me, and the creature was brought down to a willingness to obey his holy requiring, which was in the 24th year of my age, in a meeting at Ridge, where I first opened my mouth in a few words, beginning with the promise of the Almighty; "I will abundantly bless the provision of Zion; I will satisfy her poor with bread," with some other words. I sat down in great sweetness of mind; but afterwards I gave way to discouragement, for Satan, who is ever ready to frustrate

the work of Divine grace in the heart, infused various reasonings, trying to persuade me that I was mistaken, and brought to view divers instances of some who had begun and run well for a time, and then made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. Thus I struggled on for many years, while divers faithful friends were concerned for me.

In this interval I was placed in the station of an Elder, which caused very humbling feelings; sensible at the same time that if I were faithful, my service would be in a very different line. Still continuing under great exercise of mind, I often promised to give up if ever the impression was so clear again; but when the time came I found myself in the same condition. At one time my disobedience coming very heavy upon me, my mind was impressed with the belief that my day of visitation was nearly over. Yet He who is marvellous in his dealings to the children of men, saw that my thus holding back was more from a fear of running before my guide, and was pleased to pardon my disobedience and restore comfort to me. Thus the Lord dealt with me according to his wonted goodness, and gave me strength to come forth again in a few words, seven or eight years after my first appearance; and the peace I was permitted to feel surpassed anything I had ever experienced, the savor of which continued with me for some days, attended with that sweet language, "Because thou hast been faithful in this thing, in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee." May my spirit ever bow in the lowest prostration before Him who has plucked my feet out of the mire and clay and set them on a rock, and, I trust, hath in degree established my goings. Everlasting praises to his great name, now, henceforth and forevermore.

My family having increased, and being frequently on appointments in the services of Society, with the prospect of being called from home on account of my own exercises, brought me at times under much thoughtfulness about my dear family.

At one time I well remember, when alone, my mind being turned inward, the overshadowing wing of Divine Power was spread over me, and this language intelligibly impressed my mind: "If thou wilt give up to follow my holy leadings, I will be with and bless thee and take care of thy dear wife and children in thy absence;" the sense of which heavenly canopy is fresh with me at this time. May I never forget his loving kindness to me in various ways.

Thus I was through the Lord's unmerited mercy enabled to make some advancement in the way of self-denial, in being accounted a fool for the sake of my Lord and Master; and yet many discouragements were thrown in the way. But through Divine Mercy I was helped to overcome them, being satisfied that He who giveth gifts unto men, will, if waited upon and followed, enable to come up in the occupancy thereof to the praise of his own eternal Name. May I, together with all who apprehend themselves called to speak in the great Name, be careful to speak in the openings of divine life, wherein our movements will be in his power; thus preservation will be experienced from mistaking the forward activity of the creature for the putting forth of the good Shepherd. The eye of the mind being single unto Him, our vision will be clear, and ability given to move on step by step, to the honor of his great and eternal Name, casting every crown at his feet, sensible that all power, majesty, might and dominion are due unto Him who hath all power in heaven



and in earth ; that indeed we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. Here all self-exaltation is shunned as deadly poison, and the creature laid in the dust, and the Lord alone exalted.

I attended to the service required of me in different ways ; it being a time of great distress in our Society, many having gone off in the erroneous doctrines of Elias Hicks ; it was much shaken, and various appointments were made by the Yearly, Quarterly and Monthly Meetings, to endeavor to strengthen the things that remain that were ready to die. I also several times visited divers of the Quarterly Meetings under a concern of my own, with the concurrence of my friends at home, to the peace of my own mind and to the satisfaction of Friends.

He was recorded a minister in the Fifth Month, 1833, near which time, under date Tenth Month 27th, he writes : " A minister of the Gospel should be entirely given up to serve his Lord and Master, although it may be trying to flesh and blood. O, may I be preserved in the hollow of his holy hand, attentively waiting for the unfolding of his Divine will, that I may experience a being brought into his banqueting house, where his banner over me may be love. And as this is vouchsafed, whether it may be the Lord's will that I should remain pretty much at home, and take part with my dear wife in training up a numerous family, or whether He may send me to any part of his heritage, I am content, so that I may through dedication of heart be permitted to finish my course with joy, and the ministry that may have been received of the Lord Jesus."



## CHAPTER II.

## VISIT TO NORTH CAROLINA YEARLY MEETING.\*

Tenth Month, 1834. Having for some time felt my mind drawn to visit in gospel love the meetings of North Carolina Yearly Meeting, as way might open, and having the concurrence of my friends, I left my dear wife and children on the 13th of the month, in which parting opportunity the stream of Divine life was felt uniting our hearts together. We proceeded towards Hopewell, Virginia. The night previous to reaching that place, a circumstance occurred at our Inn which was very distressing to me. A short time before we arrived, a company of movers with their horses had put up for the night. When we arrived, a colored boy came immediately to our assistance and took our horses to the stable. A young man of the company of movers forbade his taking them in, though there was room sufficient; which he proceeding to do was immediately knocked down by the white man with a stone, and was taken up for dead; but by morning was so far revived as to whisper. This circumstance, together with the wicked conversation of some present about buying and selling negroes, had liked to have caused me a sleepless night.

At Hopewell he wrote to his family as follows: "We have had our health well since we left home, and have got along comfortably, except the feeling of distress that has attended in passing through a land of slavery. \* \* \*

\* John Hall, living near Mt. Pleasant, was his companion.

People here talk of buying and selling negroes with as little apparent feeling as we would of selling a horse. My mind has been kept in such a calm that every doubt has been removed respecting our present engagement, so much so that I could not wish myself anywhere else; and I humbly hope our gracious Lord and Master will be near to direct and support in every time of trial. Our dear children are often the objects of my remembrance. May you all be kept in the hollow of the Lord's holy hand.

JOSEPH EDGERTON."

We arrived at Deep River after a laborious travel of about thirteen days, I trust, under feelings of thankfulness to the Preserver of men for his many mercies; and my mind has been afresh turned to look at the motives which drew me from my outward habitation to go into a distant land; which was nothing short of an apprehension that it was the will of my Divine Master. O, that it may please Him to whom I have committed my dear wife and children, to keep them in the hollow of his holy hand, and be near to guide by his counsel in our present engagement. I feel myself a child for such a service. May I increasingly come to know that all my springs are in Him who is the strength of his people.

He again writes:—

New Garden, Guilford Co., N. C.,  
Eleventh Month, 1834.

My dear Wife:—My spirit salutes thee this morning in near and dear affection, though far separated in person, and may inform thee that I am well, and have enjoyed good health since leaving home. My dear companion's health is also good. \* \* \* The Meeting for Sufferings was held on Sixth-day; the Select Yearly Meeting on

Seventh-day, and on Second-day the Meeting for Discipline commenced. Our dear friend, Nathan Hunt, addressed me in this encouraging language: "My dear brother, go on cheerfully in the work of the Lord, and thou wilt get through to thy humbling admiration." And I can acknowledge that his presence has been vouchsafed to us, unworthy as we are; and ability has been furnished for the portion of labor allotted us. Many are the trials meted out to those who engage rightly in this great service, at a time when so many of the members of our Society are contenting themselves with a name to live, while they remain in a state of death and darkness. I have felt it to be a very great undertaking that we are engaged in, and nothing short of Divine power can abilitate for it. I have often to recur to thee and my dear relatives and friends at home, whose prayers, I have no doubt, have been put up for me, that I may be preserved in the service that is called for at my hands, which has been a strength many times to my drooping mind in the prospect of arduous labor. The desire of my heart has been that I might be entirely given up to the will of the Lord. The Yearly Meeting has been large, and, so far, favored. It has, I think, been a solid meeting, and the business conducted in harmony.

Thy loving husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Seventh-day, 8th of Eleventh Month.—Attended Hope-well Monthly Meeting. A time of close exercise; but ability being afforded to perform the portion of labor allotted, we left in peace. My mind has often been clothed with a feeling of my own unworthiness and the greatness of the work; under the consideration whereof my mind

is bowed in awful prostration, desiring that He whose mercies are over all his works, may condescend to be near for my support under every trial, and enable me to keep so devoted to his service, that all his commandments may be obeyed—that my soul may be even as a weaned child, weaned from all dependence upon my own attainments, confiding in Him alone, through whose Divine and wonder-working power, transgressors are taught his ways, and sinners converted unto Him.

Second-day, at Union.—My mind was impressed with the necessity of the members of our religious Society keeping their habitations in the truth, and felt peace of mind in dropping some close remarks. Set out on Third-day morning towards Surrey County, and arrived at Fawbush Creek late in the evening, and attended their meeting on Fourth-day, which was a time of deep exercise to me. My soul is often clothed with sadness on account of the lukewarmness that prevails in many of the members of our Society; and the situation of those who go forth rightly on Gospel errands, seems to me to be very similar to that of some formerly, who taking their lives in their hands, went through the enemy's camp to bring water from Bethlehem's well to thirsty souls. Some very close remarks were dropped to some who were but stumbling blocks in the way of serious inquirers after truth.

Fifth-day, at Deep Creek.—The fore part was laborious, but towards the conclusion life arose, so that I humbly hope it was a time of instruction to many. First-day attended meeting at Newberry. A very stormy day. It continued to rain and freeze, until it became the most extraordinary sleet I ever saw, the timber being so loaded with ice that it is very much broken, and by the obstruction of rain, ice, and fallen timber in the roads, travelling

is impracticable ; so we have felt the necessity of a fresh supply of patience. Being thus weather-bound, I have been led to view that which drew me from my home and near and dear friends, whose feeling sympathy I had ; and I have no doubt their prayers are put up to the Preserver of men for my preservation and safe return to them and my dear family, with the reward of peace. May it be my experience, for I am confirmed in the belief that it is only through Divine mercy that this can be obtained.

Being thus unexpectedly detained for near two days, it proved a time of deep baptism to me, such as I have rarely, if ever, experienced. My soul was ready to cry out in the language of David : " I sink in deep mire where there is no standing !" But through Divine mercy, light broke forth, so that all within me was bowed in awful prostration. O, may I never forget his matchless and unmerited blessings, conferred on me an unworthy worm of the dust. I believe it is in the counsels of that wisdom that cannot err, that fiery trials are meted out, not only to prepare to sympathize with and to speak to the states of others similarly proved, but also to feel the necessity of an entire dependence upon that Arm of Divine power which alone can qualify for service. O, that I may be so attentive to the voice of the Good Shepherd as to be preserved out of the mixture, that the pure spring of life may be kept to.

Eleventh Month 22d, 1834, he again writes :—

My dear Wife :— \* \* \* We have been very closely engaged every day except two that we had to lie by, in consequence of the sleet. We have been favored to get along, to the relief and peace of our minds. Many baptisms are our portion. The languid state of our Society

in many places is, as Samuel Fothergill observes, like pensively musing on a scroll that is written within and without with lamentation, mourning and woe; so that the situation of those who go forth in the Lord's service is very similar to that of some of David's worthies, who taking their lives in their hands, passed through the camp of the uncircumcised and brought water from the well of Bethlehem to the thirsty soul. But my gracious Master has been good to me, not only in affording ability to perform what He requires, but in giving that peace which passeth understanding. We are now through the meetings of New Garden and Deep River Quarters. Friends in this country have no fire in their meeting-houses; I have seen but one that had any opportunity of warming it.

\*

\*

\*

\*

I remain affectionately,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Fourth-day, 26th.—Had a meeting at Kennet; a time of close labor to some lukewarm professors. Went to Springfield, and attended meeting there on Sixth-day, and a very favored meeting it was. The Lord's power rose into dominion over all, and praises ascended unto Him who alone gave the victory.

Seventh-day attended the Quarterly Meeting at New Salem, which was a time of deep exercise; but in some close labor to the lukewarm professors, with encouragement to the wrestling seed, relief was obtained.

Fourth-day at Providence. A time of close labor with some lukewarm professors. At Salem, life was low; but by close attention strength was afforded to minister in the ability that God giveth, to the relief of my mind. At Marlborough our gracious Master was near to strengthen



for his service. The states of the people were spoken to, I trust, in the ability which He gives. At Uharee, which was an open time, the doctrines of the Gospel were opened, and, I trust, it was a time of instruction to many.

Second-day, at Bethel; a time that I hope will be remembered by some. Ability was afforded to labor for the growth and establishment of the members of our religious Society upon the immovable foundation, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. The meeting ended in solemn prayer to God. May the many mercies of which we are made partakers, animate us to follow Him with increased dedication, and not be dismayed at any prospect of service required by our gracious Master, who hath hitherto helped us.

The meeting at Piney Ridge was a time of deep exercise and close labor. At Holly Spring truth rose into dominion, and the stream of Gospel love flowed forth, to the refreshment of many. May the praise be returned to God, to whom alone it is due. Fifth-day, rode to Long's settlement, and in the afternoon had the few Friends there together; and that evening went to the house of Joshua Johnson, where we had an opportunity in the family. I had to labor closely against a worldly spirit. I have often thought there is no state harder to reach, than that wherein the Divine witness is so buried in the rubbish, and not suffered to rise. To awaken these is a miracle, indeed; and yet, in passing from house to house, I have endeavored to declare the whole counsel of God, however humiliating to the creature.

After attending Cane Creek Monthly Meeting, and the meetings of South Fork, Spring Meeting and Eno, he set out for Contentney, and arrived in the neighborhood on

Fifth day evening. Seventh day, attended Contentney Monthly Meeting, and at meeting there on First-day, which was owned by the Head of the Church.

Twelfth Month 15th, 1834.

My dear Wife :—We are now at uncle William Edgerton's, after a laborious travel among the meetings of New Garden, Deep River, Southern and Western Quarterly Meetings ; having been engaged every day for five weeks, except two in time of the sleet. I think we endeavored to improve the time to the best advantage ; and I have thought it right to do so, remembering the strong claims that my dear family have upon me, and shall rejoice when the time comes that a release from further service is proclaimed, and liberty given to return to them. In relation to our getting along in the great work in which we are engaged, we feel that we have cause for thankfulness to Him who hath afforded help in every time of trial, strengthening for the service that He required. And although in many places where we have been, our minds were clothed with mourning, under a sense that the seed of immortal life is borne down and oppressed, even as a cart loaded with sheaves, yet, in most places, there is a remnant that is as the salt of the earth, to whom my spirit has been nearly united in the bonds of Gospel fellowship.

We expect to set off in the morning for Core Sound. It would have been pleasant to the creature, to have been excused from going there, a distance of 120 miles. But a release from it I could not feel. They have a Monthly Meeting at that place, though very small.

Under date, Twelfth Month 17th, he writes in the same letter :—

We have been this day to Neuse Meeting, where my father and mother went many years; and a very favored meeting we had. The Lord hath a remnant here who, I trust, will be abilitated to support the testimonies of our Society. Very often does my mind visit thee, knowing that thy time is very closely taken up with thy domestic duties, but trust the Eternal God will be thy refuge, and underneath the Everlasting Arms, to comfort and refresh thy drooping spirit. He has been good to me, even strength in weakness, riches in poverty, and a present help in the needful time, that I feel encouraged to trust in Him and persevere in the work. Our dear children are often the object of my tender solicitude. I want you, dear children, to do all you can to make your dear mother comfortable, and do nothing to grieve her.

I remain affectionately,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

At Nahunta and Neuse River, both favored meetings, particularly in the latter; many hearts were prepared to return praise to Zion's King. At Core Sound Meeting, Holy Help was near; so that I thought I was fully compensated for all my fatigue in getting there. At Rich Square, on First-day, a time of deep baptism. O, that the Lord, who alone can subdue all things unto himself, may, in the way that is consistent with that wisdom that cannot err, carry on the work, until our dependence is wholly placed upon Him who worketh wonders in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath,—who maketh the clouds his chariots, and walketh on the wings of the wind, and can sanctify the most severe dispensations, and make them ministers of his will. O! thou great and eternal Jehovah, thou hast been pleased to be near in the

time of need, and to abilitate for thy service hitherto, wilt thou be pleased to continue thy all-sustaining Arm underneath. Then will I teach transgressors thy way, and sinners, through thy Divine Power, shall be converted unto thee; that so everlasting praise may be rendered unto thee, the Lord God, and the Lamb, our adorable Redeemer, not only now, but henceforth and forevermore.

At Perquimans County, Twelfth Month 31st, 1834, he wrote:—

My dear Wife:— \* \* \* My heart is often clothed with breathing desires for our children, that they may be kept in innocency; that as they advance in years, they may grow in grace. And, my dear, I assuredly believe thy reward is sure. Thou mayest have many trials, both within and without, yet the Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. Mayest thou be encouraged and enabled to lift up thy head above the waves. \* \* \* I feel the need of the prayers of the living ministers of the Church, which I have no doubt have been beneficial to me, as the path is a tribulated one, and at times it seems as if every step taken is upon enchanted ground. But the good Shepherd has been near to support; and oh, that He may continue his care over me, and preserve me from dangers, both within and without, for it is of his mercy; therefore, may the praise be ascribed unto Him alone to whom it is due.

It is a comfort, notwithstanding my feelings are at times as described above, to find a remnant that are concerned for the testimonies and discipline of our religious Society in this land, and to mingle in fellowship with them. My mind is often turned towards Friends of our Yearly Meeting, with desires that the Head of the Church might pre-

serve us from the snares of the enemy, and draw us nearer unto himself and unto one another; that by walking by the same rule and minding the same thing, we might grow up a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, showing forth the praises of Him who hath called us; that everything that might prove prejudicial to the peace and prosperity of Society, might be kept down, and we experience Jerusalem, a quiet habitation.

I must conclude, hoping in the Lord's time we shall be favored to meet, to our comfort and his praise.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Attended meetings at Beech Spring, Piney Ridge, New-begun Creek, Little River and Symond's Creek, in all of which ability was afforded for required service.

At Elizabeth City my mind was clothed with mourning under a sense of the low state of Society in these parts; but by laboring honestly, relief was obtained. Sutton's Creek Monthly Meeting was also a time of close labor to some lukewarm professors; though encouragement flowed forth to the exercised remnant. The meeting at Wells, on First-day, the 11th, was a time of great suffering to me. Truth was under oppression, even as a cart loaded with sheaves. And now, feeling released from further service in this land, we set off from the house of David White for home, the 12th of First Month, 1835, under a sense of the Lord's abundant mercy, who has been pleased to be near and support in every time of trial, and has given ability for the work whereunto He hath called.

After his return, he writes:—

Barnesville, Belmont County, Ohio,

Second Month 7th, 1835.

Dear Cousins, Thomas and Elizabeth Kennedy :—Being



by my own fireside, and enjoying the company of my dear family and friends, my mind is often turned towards friends of North Carolina, many of whom my spirit feels nearly united to in the bonds of Gospel fellowship. I may inform, that from Rich Square we proceeded to Perquimans and Pasquotank, taking all the meetings of Friends, and got through on First-day, the 11th of First Month, and set our faces towards home the 12th, under a sense of the Lord's gracious dealings towards us, unworthy as we are, in affording Divine aid in this variously-trying journey. Our hearts were prepared to return thanksgiving and praise unto Him to whom it is due ; and I was favored to reach home on the 29th, where I found my dear wife and family well, to our mutual comfort and consolation. May his great and worthy name be honored and adored, through whose power alone we were preserved from dangers, both within and without, and brought back again to our families and friends, with the reward of peace. A peaceful poverty seems to be the clothing of my mind, and desires have been raised, that whether the great and good Master may ever call forth in his service again or not, I may be so devotedly given up to wait at the King's gate, that his will may be done ; as I apprehend, there can be no higher anthem sung by mortal man than, "Not my will, but thine be done." My dear friends in that part of the Lord's heritage have often been fresh in my memory, together with many favored meetings we had when in your land ; the great Head of the Church being pleased to be near, bringing us as members of the same body unto near unity with each other ; our hearts at times being made to rejoice because of his goodness. And those who had not come to the like happy experience, were often the objects of feeling concern, that they, through the effectual working of

the Lord's power, might be brought into the same living body, of which Christ is the Head,—to know a being children of Jerusalem that is above, and is free, which, saith the great apostle, is the mother of us all; for all who come to know a being made free by Christ the Son, are free, indeed.

I want your encouragement in the line of allotted duty. Our Divine Master will support in every time of trial, and will abilitate for every service required. I feel much for Neuse Meeting; doubtless the Lord's mercies are extended to you, and He would turn his hand upon some of you in a particular manner if faithfulness were abode in; and fit for his work and service, to the praise of his great Name. Yes, I believe He would gather the lambs with his arms and carry them in his bosem, and gently lead those that are under a living exercise. Thus He would raise up testimony-bearers that would not be ashamed to confess their Lord and Master before men. I should be glad to hear of Joseph Everett's endeavoring to have his negroes removed to free governments while life and health are afforded; time is very uncertain.

I remain your affectionate cousin,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

The following is taken from a copy of a letter to his valued friend, Nathan Hunt:—

Second Month 27th, 1835.

Dear Friend:— \* \* \* I often thought when travelling through your land, that the faithfulness of Friends there in regard to our testimony against slavery, has been blessed; and I think there is cause for encouragement to embrace every opportunity that wisdom and prudence would dictate, to plead the cause of that op-

pressed part of our fellow men. And although your efforts in memorializing the Legislature on their behalf may not have met with that success which was desired, yet I do not think that should discourage you from doing what appears to be your duty. I am confirmed in the belief that, notwithstanding all the opposition that is made by men of corrupt minds, the cause is gaining ground; even those who hold slaves are becoming more and more uneasy; the witness for God is not easily removed into a corner. I have felt, both while there and since, much for my friends of North Carolina, and hope that our religious Society in other parts of the heritage, will manifest a brotherly participation in the concern, not only by rendering their assistance in a pecuniary point of view, but in sympathy for you who are called upon to test the ground of our testimony against slavery more conspicuously; that so there might be a harmoniously joining together, and through the Divine blessing, be instrumental, in some degree, in removing from our favored nation that load of guilt that is attached to slavery.

I have had to recur to many of my dear friends in that land, to whom we felt nearly united in the bonds of Gospel fellowship; and, no doubt, the language has been reciprocal at times, where there has been admittance granted to the throne of grace, in sweet remembrance, "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee, send thee help from his sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion."

It is a privilege that the living members of the Church have, of eating of the same spiritual meat and drinking of the same spiritual and Divine fountain, and herein their unity and fellowship is known. Give my love affectionately to inquiring friends in thy freedom, particularly to



thy son Thomas, his dear wife and children, thy daughter Abigail, and her husband.

I wish your Boarding School concern good success. Many Friends, I think, are not aware of the great advantage of having their children placed in such a school, under the immediate care and superintendence of the Yearly Meeting. Ours progresses slowly. It is to be hoped, that in the course of the ensuing season, more active operations will be gone into for the accomplishment of the object.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Third Month 15th, 1835.—In reviewing the various trials attendant on my late engagement in a distant land, together with the numberless blessings that I have been the unworthy partaker of, all within me capable of feeling, has been bowed in awfulness before Him through whose fatherly care, by day and by night, preservation was experienced. May his great name be magnified and adored, who is the good Shepherd, leading forth his dependent children in the work whereunto He calleth them. Oh, that I may be preserved so near the spring of Divine life, that I may be kept out of the mixture; that whether or not the Lord should ever make use of such a poor, unworthy creature, as an instrument in the support of that cause which is dignified with immortality and crowned with eternal life, that the work of sanctification may go on, until the dross and the tin, and even the reprobate silver may be removed out of the way. I have, in viewing the languid state of our Society in many places, felt my mind clothed with mourning to see so many come so far short of the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, being settled in a state of lukewarmness, for whom my feelings have often been awakened, lest the dreadful

sentence pronounced against the Laodicean Church should ultimately fall upon them. Yet notwithstanding this, my faith is at times strengthened to believe that the Lord will carry on his work in the earth; and if those who have long been visited and invited to the supper refuse the offer, and go one to his farm, another to his merchandise, others will be called in from the highways and hedges, who will not be ashamed to acknowledge their Lord and Master before men.

The following is an extract from a letter addressed to John Hall, who accompanied him in his late visit:—

First Month 3d, 1836.

Dear Friend, John Hall:—I have many times remembered thee since being at thy house, and feelings of sympathy and brotherly affection have been afresh excited by the reading of thy acceptable letter to sister Mary Edgerton, which I was glad to have the opportunity of; and I can say, that my faith remains unshaken in that Arm of Power that gathered our religious Society from the various forms and ceremonies of the world, and of professing Christians, to be a separate and distinct people. And by the illuminations of the day-spring from on high, with which they were very eminently favored, they saw that, through the dark night of apostacy from primitive purity that had overtaken the primitive Church, many corruptions had made their way into it. Hence they believed it to be their religious duty to bear testimony to the purity and spirituality of the religion of Jesus Christ. And these testimonies were so dear to them, that the most cruel persecutions could not deter them from that which they saw to be their duty; and herein they were willing to prove by their conduct, that to fulfil the will of their Lord and

Master, and thereby maintain a conscience void of offence towards God and man, was more to them than any worldly consideration, or even liberty or life itself; and through the fresh openings of Divine light and life in their souls, they were enabled to hold up a pure and perfect standard of Christian doctrine, which will remain unsullied to the latest period. Dear John, my spirit has at times been broken into tenderness in the remembrance of the state of Society, and mental desires have arisen to the Shepherd of Israel that He may be pleased to remember his heritage, that his humble dependent children and servants in every part thereof that are earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, may by that invincible Arm of Power be supported; that He may indeed be a spirit of judgment to those who sit in judgment, and strength to them that turn the battle to the gate. And in the midst of mournfully distressing feelings that do attend, my faith has at times been renewed in our Holy Head, whose watchful care, both by day and by night, is towards the tried and tribulated seed of Jacob; whose promise is, "Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on her son? yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee, saith the Lord." My dear brother, I desire thy encouragement as well as other faithful Friends who keep to that which was our foundation when it pleased the Lord to gather us to be a people, and which is, and will remain to be an impregnable fortress, against which present and succeeding storms will ever beat in vain. I feel for thee in thy peculiarly trying situation, and hope thou wilt be enabled to do or to suffer, as may be consistent with the Divine will, and much suffering is thy portion, I have no doubt. My wife joins me in love to thee, thy dear wife and children.

Extract from a letter to his brother :—

Third Month 11th, 1836.

Dear Brother and Sister :—I often have to recur to opportunities that we have had together, before you moved to Indiana, wherein not only the ties of natural relationship were felt, but also that threefold cord or bond of Gospel fellowship, which rendered your company and society very pleasant to us. And these reflections upon the occurrences and feelings of days that are past, have at times been attended with desires that we might be preserved in a state of humble dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ, who has said: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Oh, for this state of humility, wherein the pride and haughtiness of man is bowed down, the man's part broken, and the Lord alone exalted; then, and not till then, can we come to realize that Scripture language: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children," and experience our feeble steps to be in that path which "no fowl knoweth, the vulture's eye hath not seen it, the lion's whelps have not trodden in it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." That it is entirely beyond the conception of the natural man, comparable to the vulture's eye, though he may by the aid of reason, with which he is richly furnished, be able in his researches to comprehend deep and hidden mysteries in the laws of nature, yet all attempts to comprehend the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom will be in vain. And in this an eminent apostle speaks very plainly, where he says: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither, indeed, can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It is a way cast up for

the ransomed of the Lord to walk in (through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ), who "shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." The more we come to experience this heavenly condition, the more we shall see of the weakness and insufficiency, and even corruption of human nature; and though we may have been favored in some degree to run in the way of his holy will, yet that acknowledgment will arise: "It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, He hath saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." Then the invaluable pages of Holy Scripture will be dear to us, and the precious truths therein contained will be unfolded from time to time to our edification and comfort, by the Spirit of Truth, which has been sent to teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance. My sincere desire is that we may be firmly established upon that foundation which our religious Society was gathered to and settled upon, which will prove a fortress against which all storms, both present and to come, will beat in vain, and so be found faithful in the occupancy of the talent received, to the peace of our own minds and to the glory of the great Name.

I am thy affectionate brother,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

## CHAPTER III.

## VISIT TO INDIANA YEARLY MEETING.

Ninth Month 23d, 1836.—Having felt drawings in my mind to pay a visit in the love of the Gospel to Friends in Indiana Yearly Meeting, and having the concurrence of my friends at home, I took a solemn leave of my dear family and friends under an humbling sense of the love and mercy of our Heavenly Father; and ability was afforded to offer up supplication to the Shepherd of Israel for his support and protection in every time of trial, and that He would enable his humble followers to trust in his eternal Name. My kind friend, Edmund Bailey, feeling a concern to accompany me, we set out, and arrived at Richmond, Indiana, on the 30th. Attended the Yearly Meeting, which commenced on Seventh-day following, which was a solid, instructive season.

Seventh-day, the 8th of 10th Month.—Set out towards Blue River Quarter; attended meetings at Milton and Bethel, in both which ability was given to relieve my mind, though mourning and lamentation were the covering thereof. At Hopewell Meeting, ability was vouchsafed to labor honestly for the gathering of a number present, to the teaching of the minister of the true tabernacle, which the Lord hath pitched, and not man. Attended meetings at Walnut Ridge, Little Blue River, Sand Creek and Driftwood, in all of which I was enabled to discharge what I had in commission. May I be kept in such a state of humble dependence upon my blessed Master, that I may be preserved out of the mixture; that



self may never attempt to take the Lord's jewels and deck itself withal; but that the creature may be kept in such a state of humility, that every crown may be cast at the feet of my blessed Lord and Master, with the acknowledgment: "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are all thy ways, thou King of saints." Second-day, rode to Old Blue River. Third-day, attended their Monthly Meeting, to satisfaction; and feeling impressions of duty towards the inhabitants of Salem, notice was given for a meeting in the evening, which was largely attended by those not of our Society, who were very orderly. My dear friend, James Hadley, being on a religious visit, joined in the concern, and through the mercy and gracious assistance of our Divine Master, it was a favored meeting, and, I trust, the cause of truth did not suffer by it. The awfulness of the responsibility that attaches to one engaged in the gospel embassy, is at times very humbling to my mind. May the Lord, whom I desire to serve, be pleased to preserve, through heights and through depths, and enable me faithfully to serve Him through all, being so attentive to his voice, that on the one hand none of the intimations of his holy will may be shrunk from; and on the other, that there may not be a going forward without his command; that so his will may be done; and then, should there be, through the help of our holy Leader, the crown given as the reward of faithfulness, all will be laid at the feet of our adorable Captain, under whose banner we have been engaged, with the humble acknowledgment: "That not unto us, O, Lord! but to thy name" be the glory and praise, for ever and ever.

Tenth Month 21st, 1836.

My dear Wife:—My heart salutes thee this evening in the fresh flowings of endeared love, which runs through my heart as a stream, and is attended with a hope, that He whom I desire to serve, will be pleased to support us in this separation, and preserve us under his almighty wing in such a humble and dependent state, that we may be enabled to run the ways of the great Master's requirements with cheerfulness and resignation. I have been favored to keep pretty cheerful most of the time, the blessed Master condescending to go before; indeed, I could not go without the sensible feeling of his presence, which has been vouchsafed to us beyond what we could have expected.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Seventh-day 22d, at Quarterly Meeting; and on First-day, had a public meeting at the same place, which were owned by the good Shepherd,—particularly the latter was a favored opportunity,—the meeting closing under a solemn feeling of the Lord's goodness, under which supplication was offered up to Him who is worthy to receive glory, honor, thanksgiving and praise. Many hearts were broken into tenderness; and on taking leave of each other, tears flowed freely. May the praise be returned unto Him to whom it is due. That afternoon, had a public meeting at Paoli; my dear friend, James Hadley, who has been with us for some days, was well engaged, and I have a hope the blessed cause did not suffer by it. Third-day, attended meeting at Indian Creek, which was a laborious time. Oh, the dryness of nominal professors. I have often thought it the hardest state to reach of any; but ability was vouchsafed in a very close way to relieve my mind.



From thence, rode towards Honey Creek, through mud and water, in many places up to the horses' bodies; and a very narrow escape I had of being much hurt by my horse falling down in a swamp, and was very near being on me. Under a sense of the Lord's mercy and providential care over me, may my soul bow in awful prostration before Him who is worthy to be worshipped, honored and obeyed; and may I be so devoted to the will of my gracious Lord and Master, that all his requisitions may be complied with. On reaching Honey Creek, had a meeting there with the few Friends of that place, and some of the neighbors, which proved a very relieving opportunity, which is a rich reward for all the fatigue in getting there. After meeting, set out for Sugar River Monthly Meeting, to be held on Seventh-day, where we arrived in time, and peace of mind was vouchsafed as a reward for honest labor to a lukewarm condition; with encouragement to the mourners in Zion. We attended meetings at Sugar Plain, Sugar River, Flint and Pine Creek, in all of which ability was given to throw off the burden that rested on my mind, and a portion of that peace which passeth the understanding of the natural man was, through the mercy of our holy Leader, vouchsafed. One other signal deliverance I will mention. As I was riding with my companion and other Friends, from Sugar River to Flint, and going across a swamp, my horse mired very deep, and fell and threw me over his head; but through mercy I was preserved from being hurt, though I got entirely wet, except my head; but having my clothing with me, we soon went on again, under a feeling of thankfulness to the Preserver of men for his watchful providence over me. May my heart return thanks and praise unto Him who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praise, doing wonders. Sixth, attended

Select Preparative Meeting at Vermillion, and Seventh-day, Monthly Meeting at Elwood; but my mind was not so relieved as would have been desirable, and, probably, might have been the case if I had been more instant in season; but as it was not wilfully done, I passed away pretty comfortably. First-day, Vermillion and Hopewell Meetings were both relieving opportunities, though very close labor went forth to the careless sons and daughters who are sitting at ease in Zion. Third-day, was at Rocky Run Meeting, at Bloomfield Select Preparative, and Fourth-day, at the Monthly Meeting, which was a laborious time. Fifth-day, at Poplar Grove and Rush Creek, which were owned by the good Master's presence. The Select Quarter was a low time; but peace was vouchsafed as a reward for faithfulness, in some close remarks dropped among them. The Meeting for Discipline was a time of very close labor; the seed of life being in such a state of suffering, that the harps of those who at times were prepared to utter the praises of the Lord, were for a time hung upon the willows: but ability was afforded in a remarkably close manner to throw off the exercise, which I do esteem a great favor.

Had a public meeting at the same place (Bloomfield) on First-day forenoon, which was a favored season, and ended in solemn supplication. That afternoon, had a meeting in the town of Rockville, to which came a large number of those not of our religious Society, who were very attentive, and the meeting ended well.

Here he wrote to his wife:—

Eleventh Month 15th, 1836.

My dear Wife:— \* \* \* Thy letter was very acceptable, and I could but take notice that the very day

that thou entered so deeply into feeling with me, was a very trying day to me. We were that day at Milton and Bethel, and the cup of suffering rather exceeded. I thought it remarkable. I hope we shall still be preserved alive in the root of immortal life, where we may be favored to feel each other, and rejoice in the mercies of our gracious Lord and Master, who is still disposed to hear the cries of the poor and the sighs of the needy. \* \* \*

Thy affectionate husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Attended White Lick Monthly Meeting, which was a good meeting; then a meeting at Fairfield, not so favored. At the Select Quarterly Meeting, silent; and the Quarterly Meeting, which was a favored time.

First-day, having had a prospect of a public meeting in this place, in the forenoon, also one for the youth in the afternoon, the appointment was made, and a day of favor it proved. He who saw meet to call forth into his harvest, was pleased to favor with his presence, and to be mouth and wisdom, tongue and utterance, to my humbling admiration. May the Lord alone be exalted. Worthy is He to be waited for, followed, worshipped and adored by all his people, for they experience Him to be their strength in weakness, riches in poverty, and a present help in the needful time. Second-day, at West Union; a favored, good meeting. A number of our friends were with us at our kind friend, David Lindley's, to whom our spirits were closely united in the heavenly relationship. We parted in much brokenness of spirit, with mental breathings of soul to the Preserver of men for his all-supporting care, and that we might be kept in the hollow of his hand,

and finally be granted an admission into the mansions of eternal rest.

We attended meetings at Spring, Mill Creek, Sugar Grove, Fairfield, Easton and Lick Branch, in all of which the blessed Master's presence was near, giving ability to sound an alarm among them, particularly at the two last-mentioned; peace was my portion. Rode to Indianapolis. Had a meeting with the few Friends there, with some of their neighbors; and in the evening had a meeting in the town for the inhabitants; which were relieving in some degree, and, I trust, the cause of truth did not suffer by it. Before setting off for Westfield, we had a very solemn parting at the house of Jacob and Esther Willets, with several other Friends. Arrived that evening in the neighborhood of Richland. Had a meeting on Third-day morning at that place, and in the afternoon at Westfield, both of which were seasons of suffering, particularly the former, the seed of life being borne down. My spirit was clothed with mourning, under the awful consideration of the state of those who are dead while they live; thus they glide along in a state of insensibility to their eternal interest. The reward of peace was afforded in the discharge of duty in an alarming manner.

Fourth-day, at Hinkle's Creek; a day of favor. Openness was felt to declare the way of life and salvation to the few Friends, and a number not in membership; the meeting ended with solemn supplication to the Father and Fountain of all our sure mercies. Fifth-day, had a meeting at Fall Creek, in which the life of truth was very low; but ability was afforded in a close, short testimony, to throw off the burden, and peace of mind was vouchsafed. First-day, attended meeting at Clear Spring, to satisfaction; next at Duck Creek and Elm Grove; the former

was a trying meeting. Ability was given to sound an alarm among them in a very close manner. At Spice-land Meeting; was a time of suffering to me. At Rich Square, the lukewarm and worldly-minded were solemnly warned. There is, perhaps, no state harder to reach than that in which the world and the things of the world have gained the ascendancy in the heart.

Sixth, attended the Select Meeting at Westfield; seventh-day, the Quarterly Meeting, which was a season of renewed favor, the power of the Lord being present, giving ability to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. First-day, a public meeting at the same place, which was also a time of favor. We next attended New Hope, Elk and Orange Meetings. Life was at a very low state, being so little of the essence of religion known, that I thought the ways of Zion do mourn because none come to her solemn feasts. Thence to Richmond, to our kind friends, J. and J. Smith's.

Here he wrote:—

Richmond, Twelfth Month 15th, 1836.

My dear Wife:— \* \* \* The fatigue and danger of getting about have been great; though when compared with the awful service in which we are engaged, it sinks into insignificance. It is, indeed, very humiliating to the creature to feel constrained to go about in this way, exposing ourselves and appointing meetings, and at the same time sensible that of ourselves we can do nothing. This is walking by faith, and not by sight. But I can acknowledge to the praise of Him who hath called us, that He hath not forsaken in the hour of utmost need, but has been strength in weakness, riches in poverty, and, I believe, will still continue to guide and guard us, as we



confide in Him as a little child does in its earthly parent ; guiding us by his counsel, and guarding us from dangers on the right hand and on the left. Many are the baptisms that are meted out to us in passing through this land, and I can say I looked for it before I left my home ; and I have found in my measure the truth of that gracious assurance : “ My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” In most places we have found some who, like the few names in Sardis, are desirous to walk before the Lord in such a way that their garments may be kept undefiled ; to these we have been brought very near, under the feeling of that language : “ One is your Master, even Christ ; and all ye are brethren ;” and we have had all the encouragement from these that could be desired, which at times has a tendency to bear up ; but that which is never-failing is above all things to be desired. May the Lord in his mercy be pleased to continue to be our Director and Preserver in this long and arduous service, to his praise and the peace of our minds, and permit us to return to you ; for I can appeal to Him who is the Searcher of hearts, that it was from sincere apprehensions of duty to Him, and through the constraining power of Christ, that I was made willing to leave all that was dear in this life, and endeavor to follow Him through distant lands. May his great and worthy name be exalted forever and ever. It is great in Israel ; in Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion. My heart is full of endeared affection for thee, that if I were to try to put it on paper, my sheet would be too short ; but I may say that I have felt, and do feel thee in that which is more than natural, even in the seed of immortal life, in which, I hope, we shall be kept firmly established upon that Rock, against which nothing shall ever be able to prevail ; being

permitted not only to partake together of the afflictions of the gospel, but also to have the song that is ever new put into our mouths, even praises to our God, who hath dealt marvellously with us. May I be preserved in such a state of humble dependence upon Him, that his holy will respecting me may be done, and all the praise be ascribed unto Him to whom it is due. We have attended the meetings of four Quarterly Meetings, and about one-half of the fifth.

First-day, the 18th.—We attended the Monthly Meeting of New Garden yesterday. Our blessed Lord and Master was pleased to own us therein, giving ability for service required, a part of which was in a close and searching manner to the careless sons and daughters whose eyes are blinded by the god of this world. The peace vouchsafed therefor was such as richly compensated for the cold and hardship attendant thereon. May my soul dwell under the remembrance of his many mercies, for they are indeed great and marvellous beyond what I could ask or think. I informed in my last of my prospect of going to Missis-sinewa; the road at that time was so bad we declined it, and for a time I was in hopes of getting clear of it; but for some days it has returned, and if it continues with me, we may probably go. I do not forget our dear children, though I do not say much to them, my sheet forbids it; but, in a word, my love is to you; and those who are the oldest I want to be good examples to the younger, and do all you can to help your dear mother. There are several subjects that I should gladly have touched upon, that were mentioned in thy letter, but I have not room. Suffice it to say, my spirit is with the living in our Yearly Meeting, who keep to the original ground. May they be supported



in every trial. I conclude in near and dear affection to thee, the beloved partner of my life, and remain,

Thy loving husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Seventh-day, attended the Monthly Meeting at New Garden, in which our blessed Master was pleased to own us in his service, giving the victory over the powers of darkness, whereby many hearts were bowed under a renewed sense of the goodness of the Lord. My soul was humbled in an awful feeling of the love of Him who hath called forth into his service, which was a rich compensation for the fatigue of travelling through the cold. First-day, were at White Water, which was a time of favor. Next, West Grove, Fairfield and Springfield Meetings, all of which were favored, particularly the latter, in which truth rose into dominion, and the meeting ended in prayer and praise to Him whose is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. The meetings at West River, Nettle Creek, Flat Rock and Westbury, were also favored with the good Master's presence. Rode from thence to the settlement on the Mississinewa River; got to Muncy Town that evening, on White River, and found that the river was so high, that it was past fording; which caused me to examine the ground to see whether I had been mistaken in turning this way. On trying the matter as well as I could, I became settled and quiet. We were informed of a mill-pond whereon some had crossed that day. We felt willing to go on it, and crossed on the ice safely, and felt thankful to the Preserver of men for this and numberless other favors. May my soul never forget all, nor any of his benefits, but be preserved in an humble, feeling sense of his abundant goodness towards us.

Here we attended meetings at Back Creek, Deer Creek, Mississinewa, and again at Back Creek, in all of which the good Master was pleased to be near and afford ability for his service in a very close and searching manner to the careless sons and daughters who were invited to come, in the language: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." And to an exercised remnant the language of encouragement flowed freely. The reward of peace was vouchsafed to my soul, which is a rich compensation for all my fatigue and exercise over the rough and icy roads.

Set out on Fourth-day morning towards White River. It was a beautiful morning as to the outward, and through Divine mercy, was an emblem of the feeling which pervaded my mind, which was as a morning without clouds. After arriving we attended meetings at Callier Creek, Sparrow Creek, Dunkirk, White River and Jerries, in all of which the good Master furnished ability for his service; some of which was in a very close and searching manner to the lukewarm professors. My mind, I think, was never so sensibly clothed with distress and mourning, on account of the situation of this class who are taken up with the gifts and forgetting the Giver. The language of the mournful Jeremiah might be adopted: "The ways of Zion do mourn because none come to her solemn feasts." The language of encouragement flowed to a remnant who are in good degree concerned to seek after durable riches and righteousness. May my soul bow in awful prostration before Him who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.

First-day, 1st of First Month, 1837.—Were at Arba,

which was a satisfactory meeting. Next day, at Lynn and Cherry Grove; the former was a time of renewed favor. My great Master was pleased to open the spring of gospel life and to furnish ability to declare the exceeding riches of Christ. The latter was silent. I think I never saw more sensibly the necessity of an example of silence. It is greatly to be lamented that in some places there is a ministry exercised which, at best, is but in the will of man, and, therefore, instead of being living ministers of the gospel of life, they are ministers of death; which is very trying to the rightly exercised.

Third-day, at Center and Newport; the latter was a good meeting—the power of truth arose into dominion over all. The meeting ended in solemn supplication. May my soul remember the many mercies of our God, and not forget any of his benefits. Next attended meetings at Concord, Dover, Chester and Woodbury, in all of which there was strength given to declare the goodness of our God; and in a particular manner, at Chester, ability was granted to proclaim the day of the Lord unto the disobedient and worldly-minded who are in a state of separation from God. At Smyrna Meeting, the life of truth was very low; yet a door of utterance was opened in a short, close testimony, in which I had peace. First-day, were at Southfork; the blessed Master's presence was with us; but at West Branch it was a low time, although ability was given to clear my mind, and left them in peace. At Lick Branch and Union, my mind was clothed with mourning; indeed, it has been much so since being in this Quarter, under a feeling of the great declension from ancient purity. The love of the world having gained the ascendancy, a door is opened, and among others a root of bitterness has sprung up, whereby many are defiled. In the latter meeting, my

soul was drawn into vocal supplication unto the Lord, on behalf of his Church, that He would be pleased to remember his heritage in every part thereof; that inasmuch as He had been pleased to gather us to be a people, and has manifested his power and goodness in preserving us from age to age, that He would still continue his guardian care over us, and draw us nearer unto himself; that the clouds that hang over us might be dispelled; that He would in his mercy enable his humble, dependent children to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, that so there might be an increase of that living, upright zeal, which is called for at our hands. The reward of peace was given, for which my soul returned thanksgiving and praise unto Him to whom it is due. Fourth-day, at Concord, in which I was raised to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, and, to a worldly-minded state, an awfully alarming warning, who have made to themselves gods of gold and silver. The iniquity and danger of their situation was opened to them, and they were invited to turn about and embrace the offers of love that have been long extended to them, that they might be gathered into the fold of eternal rest.

At Mill Creek, the presence of Him whom I desire to serve was afforded, and strength given to raise my voice in testimony to the goodness of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with approbation, and who requires purity of heart. Left them in peace. At Randolph, my gracious Master was pleased to raise my voice as a trumpet to declare unto Jacob his transgressions, and to Israel his sins; and although life seemed low for some time, yet it gradually arose, and a sword was given me, and ability to use it in a very close way upon a spirit of indifference concerning the one thing needful, being taken up with the

money-getting spirit. The danger of their situation was clearly pointed out to them, and they invited to come, taste, and see that the Lord is good; that they might be raised out of darkness into God's marvellous light, and be enabled to walk before Him in the way that is well-pleasing in his sight. And encouragement flowed freely to the true laborers for their help and strength; that they might be enabled to persevere in the race set before them, maintaining a daily watch whereby they might experience preservation from every snare, looking forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. From thence we went to Miami Quarter, and attended Sugar Creek Meeting.

Here he wrote to his wife:—

First Month 14th, 1837.

My dear Wife:— \* \* \* Thy sweet and consoling letter was strengthening to me. I have no doubt we have been made to drink together, though far separated, both of the cup of suffering and rejoicing, feeling with and for each other; and at times under the influence of his spirit who helpeth our infirmities, enabled to put up our petitions unto Him who remaineth to be good to his people, and unto whom we can appeal, that the separation, privations and trials to which we have been exposed, have been from a settled conviction that it was his blessed will, being united to each other in the seed of immortal life, where, I trust, we shall be preserved on that immovable foundation, united to the living in our Israel, who are waiting for the consolation thereof, who are at this time of great treading down, clothed with mourning and weeping, as between the porch and the altar, saying: "Spare thy people, O, Lord! and give not thine heritage to reproach." I feel much



for my dear friends at and about home in their peculiar trials. I hope they will be favored with that wisdom which is from above, whereby they will be directed aright in every step they take, and not be driven by any of E. B.'s threats from the ancient ground. My faith is unshaken, that as we keep there we shall be preserved a people to his praise; and though many may fall on the right hand and on the left, we shall, through Divine mercy, have to experience that "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, that no evil shall befall nor any plague come nigh." My dear children, it did my heart good to hear that you felt interested in helping your dear mother in my absence, for I know her trials are great, many ways. I hope and believe you will continue to be kind and obedient to her; and if it is the Lord's will to bring us together again, we shall meet under feelings of thankfulness unto Him who rules in heaven above and in the earth beneath. I must conclude, and remain to thee, my dear, in the fellowship of the Gospel, thy loving and affectionate husband, and to you, my dear children, your tender and affectionate father,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

First-day, at Springborough. I left with peace of mind. Rode that evening to Miami, where my mind was closely proved, and retired to rest under feelings of mental poverty, dispensed, no doubt, to show that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. Awoke in the morning under the calming influence of heavenly love. Second-day, at Waynesville and Turtle Creek, in both of which my good Master was pleased to be near, and to own us by his life-giving power and presence; particu-

larly in the latter. May the praise be ascribed unto Him who is matchless in wisdom, in might, dominion and power.

We arrived at Cincinnati on Third-day evening, and were kindly received by our dear friend, William Crossman. Were at their Monthly Meeting on Fifth-day; and in the evening, had a public meeting; both seasons of favor, particularly the latter. Sixth-day, rode back to Miami, and attended meetings at Harveysburg and Cæsar's Creek on Seventh-day; in both of which the great Master was pleased to manifest himself by the breaking of bread; the latter was eminently crowned with his presence, and the meeting closed with solemn supplication unto Him who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.

First-day, at Richland, where, after a considerable time of silence, I was raised up, and led on the subject of the different dispensations, that which was given by Moses and that which came by Jesus Christ; wherein was opened the great difference between them, and that John the Baptist was of, and belonged to the former. For some time there appeared to be great opposition; but towards the close, truth got the victory; and after the meeting closed, I observed a female who was so broken down, that she had much ado to refrain from weeping aloud. May the Lord be praised for all his works.

Second-day, were at Newbury Monthly Meeting, which was owned by the Master's presence being near, to heal and restore to perfect soundness all who come unto Him in living faith.

Third-day, at Clear Spring, wherein the stream of life was very low; but ability was given to labor in a very close manner to a self-righteous state; and I had to tell



them that Satan had been among them, and had drawn them from that state of littleness that some of them had experienced in days past. They were admonished to come to that situation of mind, in which true charity might be maintained, each esteeming others better than themselves. Towards the close of the meeting, information was given that a committee from the Quarterly Meeting wished to introduce a subject, and desired the shutters might be raised, which was done, and the state of the meeting thrown open, by which it appeared, that meeting had been under the care of a committee for twelve months. It appeared they had let in a spirit of contention, and coldness towards each other had ensued. It was very humbling to me to learn the situation of the meeting as opened by the committee, which had just before been laid before them. Another instance of the correctness of ministers not being filled up with information beforehand. Had I known of this difficulty before, it would have been an embarrassment to me. May the Lord be praised for all his works.

Next, attended Fall Creek and Fairfield Monthly Meetings, to satisfaction. Attended the Select Quarter, and also the Quarterly Meeting, which was crowned with the presence of the Head of the Church. First-day, at Walnut Creek, which was a crowded meeting, and a very open time; ability being furnished to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, which was humiliating to the creature.

Third-day, the 21st, had a meeting at Green Plain; then left in peace, and rode to Carmel, where we had a meeting on Fifth-day, which was, through the Lord's mercy, a favored opportunity. Sixth-day, at Westland and Goshen; both favored meetings, particularly the for-

mer, the Lord being pleased to own us in his service. From thence we rode to Columbus.

And thus closes the account of this visit, except what is contained in the following extract from a letter to his wife, dated Second Month 3d, 1837:—

\* \* \* When I last wrote thee we were at Miami. We proceeded to Cincinnati, where my dear companion was taken sick with a prevailing cold. He was quite poorly, so he was confined to his bed, which was as close a trial of the kind as I ever met with, as I had three meetings appointed near Waynesville. The thought of having to leave him behind, added to the exercise which attended in that place; not having his company at either of those meetings, was a close and proving dispensation. But He who remains to be all-powerful, was pleased to utter the language: "Peace! be still," and my poor tossed mind was centered in a peaceful quiet. I attended the Monthly Meeting, and had a public meeting in the evening, which was a good meeting. I left next morning under feelings of gratitude and praise unto Him who has dealt bountifully with me, and rode to James Smith's, where I was very kindly received by them, being weary with riding so far through the mud, and he kindly offered to go with me until Edmund was able.

I have for some time past felt my mind drawn towards the poor convicts in the State prison; and although a trial, feeling myself to be but a child, yet I do desire to be obedient to my blessed Master's will, who has been with us and has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. From thence we expect to go to Alum Creek, and through the meetings thereaway; and then, I think, if we should

be favored to get along as well as we have done, we may be at home by the 19th or 20th of the month. Edmund's horse is some lame, by which we may be detained, but I hope way will be made for us, as has been the case many times; and under feelings of gratitude be it spoken, we have been favored to get along to the relief and peace of our own minds; strength being given to throw off the burden, in many instances in a very close way. \* \* \*

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Extract from a letter to Nathan Hunt:—

Ninth Month 8th, 1838.

Dear Friend:—My mind has often of latter time been turned towards thee in the sweet remembrance of that unity, which in my measure it was given me to feel with thee when in your land; and I feel freedom to say, I hope thou wilt be favored to experience that everlasting Name which has been thy morning light and the strength of thy meridian day, to be also thy evening song; being as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, that none of the trials which may be permitted to attend, either present or to come, may have a tendency to depress thy feelings too much. It is indeed a day of peculiar trial to the Church; the enemy has been very busy in drawing off thousands of this Society into a disesteem of the Holy Scriptures, denying the blessed doctrines they contain; and then by turning his snare over, has drawn many into a spirit that would place them above that which they declare themselves to be, designating them the primary rule of faith and practice, and so falling back again very near to that which our worthy forefathers were gathered from. Others who have not gone quite so far are reasoning and contending about the resurrection of the dead and day of judg-

ment, coming very near the doctrine of many other religious societies. But while ours has, and does freely own every part of Christian doctrine, they deem it unsafe for them to adopt those gross views, but rather keep to Scripture language that a spiritual body is raised. Here our forefathers were preserved in inward quiet, choosing rather to enjoy the fruits of the Spirit in silent waiting before the Lord, for the arising of that power which they experienced to be able to raise them from dead works to serve the living God. In this humble, retired state, there was no desire to become wise above that which is written, knowing that secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed unto us and to our children. Thus were they blessed, growing stronger and stronger in the power of an endless life. Oh, that it might be the experience of all who are making the same high profession; then it might be said, "No enchantment can prevail against Jacob, nor divination against Israel."

\*

\*

\*

\*

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

---

## CHAPTER IV.

VISIT TO THE YEARLY MEETINGS OF PHILADELPHIA,  
NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND; EXTENDING TO NEW  
BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

HAVING for some time felt my mind drawn to travel to the eastward, I opened a prospect thereof in our Monthly Meeting, in the First Month, 1839; and the way being open therefor, I proceeded to arrange my business in or-

der to leave home. Being in limited circumstances, it was no small exercise to me; but I was enabled to commit my dear wife and tender children into the Lord's holy hand, and set out on the 30th of Third Month following, under a solemn covering, wherein earnest prayers were put up for preservation, in the language: "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee, send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion;" which I have no doubt was mutual, wherein we were enabled to commit each other into his holy care and keeping. William Dewees bearing me company, we were favored to arrive at Westland on Third-day evening, 2d of Fourth Month, and went to see our dear friend, Mildred Ratcliff, whom we found very low in body, but strong in the faith, saying: "I feel renewed evidence that I 'have not followed cunningly devised fables,' but real, substantial truth." Fourth-day, travelled on, and reached a small meeting of Friends in the neighborhood of Monallen (where Abel Thomas once lived), which was held at George Wilson's, where, if we were favored with a true sense of their state, religion is at a very low ebb; but the reward of peace was given for the allotted portion of close labor. Second-day, the 8th, proceeded on our way, and arrived at Hannah Gibbons' on Third-day. My companion having been unwell for several days past, I had to leave him here, which was no small trial to me. Fourth-day, attended Lampeter Meeting, and journeyed on in the evening to Robert Moore's, where I was kindly received and lodged.

Reached the city of Philadelphia on Sixth-day, and may say, that on my way, as well as on getting there, my mind was clothed with mourning on account of the unsettled state of the Church, so that my spirit was brought into

very great suffering. At the Meeting for Ministers and Elders, on Seventh-day ; and First-day, at Arch street, in the forenoon, and Orange street in the afternoon. Through Divine mercy, the outgoings of the evening were crowned with peace and praise unto Him who is the Helper of his people.

Extract of a letter to his wife, as follows:—

Second-day morning, 15th of Fourth Month, 1839.

My dear Wife:—My heart overflows with that tender love, which has been experienced by us reciprocally, whereby we are each enabled to enter into feeling for the other ; and truly I have thought, I stand in need of thy sympathy and prayers. The conflicts have been very great since being in this city ; but our blessed Lord has been pleased to be near to support under them. I may inform thee that my health is good, and has been since leaving home. My dear companion was taken so ill on the way with an attack of pleurisy, that I had to leave him, and travel on to attend the Yearly Meeting, and thou wilt easily conclude what my feelings were. \* \* \* He, however, mended so as to come in on the cars Seventh-day, and is now with me, considerably recruited. \* \* \* I can truly say, that I seek not great things for myself, but feel like only a child in the work. I have found many dear, sympathizing friends, and have esteemed it a favor to be brought near to them in spirit. Had I the privilege of personal communication, I could say some things which prudence forbids placing on paper, respecting our poor, shattered Society. May the Lord be pleased to be near unto those who are earnestly contending for the doctrines and testimonies which have been maintained ever since we have been a people, that through his Divine



power the true standard may be lifted up against him who is the enemy of the Church. I very often visit thee in near affection, desiring that our blessed Lord may be pleased to be near unto, and bear up thy mind above the waves. My soul can acknowledge, He is good to his people. He blesses the "provision" of Zion, "and will satisfy her poor with bread." May we each be preserved in our allotments, sweet and green in the covenant of Divine life, where we may have a place in the minds of the Lord's faithful children, who abide with the seed of life, though it may be in suffering, that in his own time, we may reign with Him, and be one another's joy in the Lord.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Second-day, the Meeting for Discipline commenced; which, though trying to the living, He who gathered us to be a people, was pleased to extend his preserving Arm around, to the comfort of those who are earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. Fifth-day, at the North Meeting; a season of renewed favor. Sixth-day, the Yearly Meeting closed. Seventh day, visited several Friends in the city. First-day, attended Twelfth street meeting, to satisfaction; and in the afternoon, at Arch street; silent. Had the reward of peace, under a belief that I was in my place therein.

Second-day morning, 22d of Fourth month.—Took leave of our very kind friends in the city, in a feeling of that sweet unity of spirit which is the bond of peace, where the members of the militant Church drink together of the refreshing waters of life, and are as epistles written in each other's hearts; being each other's joy in the Lord.

Crossed the Delaware river into New Jersey, and rode to Henry Warrington's.

Third-day, at Westfield and Chester ; the latter a trying meeting. Fourth-day, at Rancocas in the morning, to satisfaction ; and at Burlington in the afternoon ; silent ; and left the meeting with peace, believing that an example of silence was my place. Fifth-day, at Mount Holly and Easton ; favored meetings, particularly the latter. May my soul bow in reverent gratitude to our holy Head, who is unto his dependent children mouth and wisdom, tongue and utterance.

Sixth-day, the 26th, at Evesham, which was a good meeting ; the doctrines of the Gospel were, I trust, opened in the "demonstration of the Spirit, and of power." May the praise be ascribed unto Him to whom it is due. Two young women came to me and took leave, desiring a place in my remembrance, which was spoken with feeling. The language arose with me : "May the Lord bless you." In the afternoon, at Upper Evesham, which was large, but not so favored as the former.

Seventh-day, at Cropwell. On sitting down with them, it was given me in my measure to experience the situation of the prophet, in "sitting where the people sat." No strength to come at anything. But as I waited patiently, I was renewedly made sensible of the necessity of these baptisms, to prepare, through holy Help, to speak to the states of those present. The power of Truth, in time, arose, and the meeting ended well. May the Lord be pleased to keep me in a low, dependent state, willing to suffer with Him, not daring to "stir up, nor awake my love till He please." First-day, at Haddonfield and New Town ; the latter silent, and I thought it a low time.

Second-day, 29th, at Woodbury, to satisfaction ; and lodged at Joseph Whittall's ; a valuable Friend and minister. Third-day, went in company with J. W., to Piles-

grove, a small poor meeting. Fourth-day, 1st of Fifth Month, at Salem Monthly Meeting, to satisfaction; rode to John Sheppard's and attended Monthly Meeting on Fifth-day. Rode to William Scattergood's and had an evening meeting at Millville, and a humble hope was granted that the cause of Truth did not suffer by it.

Having felt my mind exercised about a meeting at Port-Elizabeth, there was one appointed, and we rode to said place, which proved a relieving opportunity. Seventh-day, rode to Great-Egg-Harbor, and attended that meeting on First-day forenoon, and Galloway in the afternoon, to the peace of my mind. Third-day, at meeting at Little-Egg-Harbor, which was an open time. Fourth-day, at Barnegat. I thought the life of Truth at a low ebb. Sixth-day, at Upper Springfield; an open time in testimony in a very close manner. In the afternoon, at Mansfield. Seventh-day in the afternoon, at Crosswicks; a low time. First-day, at Trenton and Stonybrook; both of which were favored seasons. Fourth-day, attended the select Quarterly Meeting at Shrewsbury, and Fifth day, the Meeting for Discipline; and feeling some attraction towards the inhabitants, a meeting was appointed for this afternoon, which was a favored opportunity, ending in solemn prayer unto Him whose is the power, the praise and the glory forever, Amen. Rode to Plainfield, and attended meeting there on First-day forenoon, and at Rahway in the afternoon. Second-day, rode to New York to John Wood's, and wrote; an extract of which is as follows:—

New York, Fifth Month 20th, 1839.

My dearly beloved Wife:—My spirit salutes thee in that sweet unity which often runs through my heart unto

thee, even a portion of that love wherewithal thou art loved of our Heavenly Father; desiring, as for myself, that "the eternal God may be thy refuge, and underneath the everlasting arms," to support through all the trials which may attend. \* \* \* I may say, that as respects our getting along, we have great cause to acknowledge the goodness of our blessed Lord and Master; feeling in every step thus taken the truth of the expression: "Who is sufficient for these things?" yet, in waiting for the arising of the seed of life at times, when there appears very little opportunity of coming at anything; in the blessed Master's own time, light has sprung up and strength has been given; sometimes in a very close way, to the relief of our minds; and thus we have passed along through the State of New Jersey. We have attended all the meetings therein, and had two with those not of our Society, to the relief and peace of our minds.

Last Fourth-day we met with Thomas and Elizabeth Robson, which was very agreeable and strengthening to us; for, in passing through this land, my mind is often clothed with mourning on account of the weakness apparent in many places; yet, it is a comfort to find a seed in most places, that are "grieved for the afflictions of Joseph," whose spirits travail for better days. It is very acceptable and strengthening also, to hear of the lively feeling thou wast favored with, in remembrance of me in a distant land, wherein ability was experienced to commit me to the care and keeping of Him whose mercies are over all his works. Shall I say, I have thought I have been made to partake of the benefit of the prayers of my friends at home? The few lines from —— were very acceptable. My dear daughter, I desire thy growth in grace; and in order thereto, thou must be attentive to

that which shows thee what is right and what is wrong ; and thou wilt feel it thy duty to do the right ; and as thou doest so, thou wilt feel peace and love in thy heart ; and try to do so always. Thus thy mind will expand, and thou wilt see the need of guarding against all that is wrong. We are sometimes, if not on the watch, drawn off into lightness and talking, and sometimes into fretfulness, but as we are desirous to live as we ought, we shall be enabled to conduct so through the course of the day as to feel peace when we lie down at night. O, the sweet peace such are made to feel ! I well remember how it was with me when I was a boy ; I was under so much concern about getting along rightly that I thought when going to bed at night I could not go to sleep without turning my mind unto my heavenly Father, and if I had not done as I ought, I was strengthened to pray to Him on my pillow to forgive my folly, and enable me to do better next time ; and then He would give me peace and comfort. I mention this for thy instruction, for I feel at this time, as I often do, that I could have no greater joy in my children, than to see them walking in the Truth, submitting to its restraining power, desiring nothing but that which is consistent with plainness ; there is no way that we can appear so beautiful as to be plain—*decent, neat and plain*. Let thy dear sisters read this, and may the Lord direct your hearts into His fear, and into a patient waiting for Him ; thus you will be preserved in innocency, and if it please Him to permit us to meet again, I trust it may be to our mutual rejoicing. If the paternal feeling thus conveyed may but be blessed to the strengthening of you, my dear children, in the path of virtue, and thereby add a little to the strength of your dear mother, in the arduous task that devolves upon her, my desire will be answered.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.



Third-day, 21st of Fifth Month, crossed over to Long Island, and was at meeting at Westbury the next day—a good time. Fifth-day, at Flushing, which was a very trying meeting, under a sense of a worldly spirit; but in waiting patiently, in the blessed Master's time, strength was given to throw off the burden. In the evening returned to the city, and attended select Yearly Meeting on Seventh-day, which was an exercising time. The mind clothed with mourning on account of the low state of the church. The meeting on the whole was a time of great exercise, owing particularly, to a ministry that was not of the immediate putting forth of the Head of the Church; which, if suffered, is calculated to destroy the vital interests of the church.

The Meeting for Discipline commenced on Second-day, the 27th, and continued by adjournments till Sixth-day; which was in degree, favored; yet, if I was led into a true sense of the state of it, it was a low state of the church. I was favored to leave in peace, having been enabled to lay down the burden. May praise be returned to Him, who is waiting to be gracious unto His people.

First-day, 2d of Sixth Month, at Mamaroneck Meeting—a low time; but our blessed Master was pleased to appear in His own time, and gave ability to deliver what appeared to be right. In the afternoon, at Purchase; a time of favor.

Second-day, at Shappaqua, which was a season of divine favor. Next, at Croton Valley and Amawalk. The Lord was pleased to be near and to crown with His holy presence; “comforting the mourners in Zion, and the heavy-hearted in Jerusalem.” May everlasting praise be given to Zion's King, who reigneth forever and forevermore.



Lodged at William Underhill's, who was very kind to us, he going with us several days.

Fifth-day, at Croton, a small meeting, and very few of that number rightly concerned. In the evening at Peekskill; an open time.

Seventh-day, at Oblong in the forenoon, which was a low time; seemed hard to come at anything. In waiting patiently, light at length sprung up, and it was a relieving opportunity. In the afternoon, at the Branch. The life of Truth was very low, if I was favored with a true sense of the state of the meeting.

First-day, were at New Milford, which was an open time in testimony, though the life of Truth did not rise so high as at *some* seasons. Rode to Hartford; and feeling my mind drawn to have a meeting there in a house belonging to Friends, we accordingly had one appointed, and though very small, the reward of peace was given for this act of dedication. Set out in the afternoon towards Providence, where we arrived on Fourth-day evening, and were at meeting there on Fifth-day, to satisfaction; divers Friends being present, who were on their way to Yearly Meeting.

Sixth-day, at Somerset in the forenoon, which was a good meeting, and ended in prayer and thanksgiving unto our holy Head. May the praise be ascribed unto Him to whom, indeed, it is due, forever and forevermore. In the evening, at Fall River, which was an open time in testimony.

Seventh-day, at the Select Yearly Meeting; rather a low time. A few words near the conclusion, to the relief of my mind, and to the satisfaction of faithful Friends.

First-day, at public meeting at Portsmouth in the forenoon, wherein the doctrines of the Gospel were opened, I

trust, in some degree of authority. In the afternoon, at Newport; silent, as to myself, but Elizabeth Robson and John Wood were acceptably engaged.

Meeting for business commenced on Second-day, and continued by adjournment till Sixth-day, during which we were favored with divers good meetings; the Lord being pleased to unite the living members together in the bonds of the Gospel.

Seventh day, attended Westport Monthly Meeting; and in the evening, an appointed meeting at a Baptist meeting-house, which was an open time, and the people very orderly and tender.

First-day, at Little Compton in the forenoon; and in the evening at Center; both favored meetings, particularly the latter.

Second-day, at Newtown and Smith's Neck; the former a relieving opportunity, but the latter not so much so.

Third-day, at Allen's Neck in the forenoon; and feeling my mind drawn towards the inhabitants of Westport, we had a meeting appointed there in the evening. We crossed over in a boat, the river being a mile wide; and owing to the tide being down, we had some anxiety lest we should not get over in time, but we succeeded well, and reached the place in good season, to which a considerable number came, who were quiet and orderly; and through the continued mercy of the "Shepherd of Israel," we had a good meeting.

Fourth-day, at Dartmouth Monthly Meeting, which was very crowded; I suppose one thousand persons were present. The blessed Master was pleased to be near, being mouth and wisdom, tongue and utterance, to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. In the Meeting for Discipline, my mind was much exercised on account of the low

state of things amongst them, but was favored in a close manner to throw off the burden.

Fifth-day, attended the Monthly Meeting of New Bedford, which was a very exercising time. My mouth was sealed until in the Meeting for Discipline, way was made for my relief. Feeling drawn to visit Women's Meeting, it was readily granted, which also conduced to my relief; so that my soul can acknowledge that it is good to wait the Lord's time.

Sixth-day, at Long Plain and Acushnet, to the relief of our minds. We called to see our ancient friend, John R. Davis, and found him in a very sweet, lively state of mind, which was to us like a brook by the way. Mourning is much my lot of late, on account of the dear young people, who seem to have taken wings and very much left the Society. Seventh-day, at Rochester, a poor little meeting.

First-day, at a meeting at Sandwich, which was, I trust, a time of instruction to some. In the evening had a meeting in the town, which was very large. My poor frame was made to tremble under a sense of the awfulness of the occasion; but through Holy Help, I trust, the good cause did not suffer by it.

Second-day, rode to Falmouth, and in the evening had a meeting there, which was, through the goodness of Israel's Shepherd, a good meeting.

On Third-day morning, took steamboat at Woods-Hole for Nantucket, a distance of forty miles, where we arrived at Prince Gardner's, who met us at the wharf.

Here he writes to his wife, as follows:—

Nantucket, Seventh Month 2d, 1839.

My dear Wife:—In that near and tender affection which time nor distance can erase, I again salute thee, under a

lively remembrance of thy affectionate kindness, as also thy sympathy and travail of spirit with me in this arduous engagement, being a companion in tribulation in the Gospel; and I can acknowledge that it is very helpful and strengthening to be made sensible of the exercise and prayers of my dear friends at home, as well as abroad.

We are now at the house of our kind friend, Prince Gardner, on this island, in usual health, though we were much fatigued, having been very closely engaged since New England Yearly Meeting. I remember thy kind hint about overdoing the matter, and wish to be careful in this respect; but very often do I remember the strong claims which *thou* and the dear children have upon me; and I have felt a liberty, as strength holds out and way opens for it, to improve the time diligently. I can acknowledge, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." May my soul bow in humble prostration before Him. Fell in with our dear friends, T. and E. Robson, and Daniel Wheeler, coming to this island, which was very grateful to us, including many other dear friends with whom we became acquainted at the Yearly Meeting.

My dear love is to our children; my heart overflows therewith. I desire, dear children, that you may "know the God of your" dear father and mother, "and serve Him with a perfect heart and a willing mind;" for I can say from experience, that He is good to his servants,—to those who are willing to submit to his restraining power; to these He gives the rich reward of peace, even a reward that the world cannot give nor take away.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Fourth-day, at the Select Quarterly Meeting; a time of close exercise in "searching the camp." Felt the reward of peace for allotted service.

Fifth-day, at the Meeting for Discipline, which was a favored season. Adjourned to four in the afternoon. Friends from Westport did not arrive until the afternoon sitting, in consequence of contrary winds. Our dear friends, E. Robson and D. Wheeler, had good service.

Sixth-day, attended a meeting appointed by the former, to satisfaction.

Seventh-day, my dear friend, E. Robson, and myself, having felt drawn towards the select members, concluded to have a meeting with them this morning, in which weighty service the Lord was pleased to be near and strengthen to labor honestly among them, to the relief and peace of our minds.

In the evening had a meeting with the colored people, to satisfaction; also had a good meeting on First-day forenoon; and having felt my mind drawn in gospel love to the poor seamen, a general invitation was extended to them for a meeting this evening, in which the blessed Master was pleased to be near, being mouth and wisdom, tongue and utterance; and his great and holy name was exalted over all. Dear E. Robson was lively in supplication.

Second-day morning, left peacefully, and had a very pleasant passage to the Continent. Rode to Yarmouth and lodged, and were at meeting there on Third-day, which was an open relieving time. Thence to Moses Rogers,' near Pembroke, and were very kindly received. Attended meeting there on Fifth-day, to satisfaction; and in the evening had a meeting at M. R.'s house, which was an open time in declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ; I trust in some degree of gospel authority. The people were quiet and orderly, and the meeting ended in prayer and thanksgiving unto Him, "who is glorious in

holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." May my soul bow before Him to whom all praise is due.

The following is an extract of a letter written to P. and A. S., at this place:—

Seventh Month 12th, 1839.

Dear Uncle and Aunt:—Having a little leisure this evening, after a travel of thirty-eight miles to-day; and something, I trust, of that feeling of unity which has been our experience in days past to flow towards you, as also your children, I write. And although we have been much engaged in the service, for which I have been made willing to leave all that is near and dear in this life, I have often felt my mind turned towards my dear friends at home; not doubting that many of them can reciprocate the language: "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob defend thee, send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion."

Indeed, I think I should not be overrating the matter were I to say I have been sensible of the benefit of the unity and exercise of my dear friends at home. Many are the baptisms permitted to attend in such an embassy as this, whereby He is showing that this treasure, dispensed in earthen vessels, is of his own immediate preparing and pouring forth, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us; that all the praise may be given unto Him who is "Head over all things to his Church."

Notwithstanding the state of the church is such (if I have had a true sense of it) that in many places the mournful language would be applicable, "By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small;" yet a remnant is pre-



served, and appears firmly attached to the good old way—the way of Truth as professed by our religious Society; that it affords hope in the midst of discouragement. In traveling in New England, I have been struck with the great difference in the feeling manifested toward Friends *now* compared with that of many years ago; there *now* appears great openness in most places. We have had several crowded meetings amongst those not of our Society, and mostly open, relieving opportunities, giving ground to hope the cause did not suffer thereby.

I may acknowledge (to the good Master's praise be it spoken,) the "little meal in the barrel, and the oil in the cruse," have not failed; but have been renewed from time to time, so that we have been enabled to proceed, to the relief and peace of our minds. \* \* \* The Yearly Meeting of New England was a favored one. The important subjects that came before it were disposed of in the wisdom of Truth, and in much harmony, except *that* of the abolition of slavery, in which a spirit appeared that wanted more liberty to join in the popular associations of the world. But through holy help, it was in a good degree chained down, and the meeting issued suitable advice to its members similar to that given forth by our own Yearly Meeting. \* \* \*

I remain your friend,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Seventh-day, had a meeting at Mansfield, which was an open time. Rode to Providence in the afternoon, and were at the Boarding-school on First-day morning to satisfaction; and in the evening at Friends' Meeting-house, which was a time of close baptism; though feeling, as I thought, a little opening to arise, I delivered what

appeared to be right, but felt no relief thereby. May I be preserved in the hollow of the Lord's holy hand.

Third-day, at Cumberland and Lower Smithfield, and I thought the state of religion was at a low ebb. Attended a small meeting at Burrelville on Fourth-day to satisfaction; and at Smithfield on Fifth-day, to the relief and peace of my own mind.

Sixth-day, at Mendon and North Mendon; the latter silent. The people looked anxious, and finally disappointed, yet I felt calm and quiet under a belief that I was in my place in setting a sign among them. May I ever be preserved in an humble waiting state, willing to be accounted a "fool for Christ's sake." Set out in the morning for Pomphret, and called at the house of B. Joslin, who with his wife and daughter are members, remote from any meeting, having come into Society by request some years ago; and feeling my mind drawn to sit with them in the family, I trust it was a season of instruction. The daughter is under a religious concern of mind, and I felt it my duty to press the necessity of supporting the testimonies of our Society with consistency.

Pursued our journey and arrived at Pomphret in the evening, and attended meeting there on First-day; a low time as to the life of religion. A great portion of the few Friends there seemed so in the world, that my mind was clothed with mourning under a sorrowful sense thereof.

Second-day, 22d, had a meeting at Plainfield, which, although a trying one, peace was my reward for endeavoring to discharge my duty faithfully. A little parting opportunity with the family where we dined proved a relieving time.

Third-day, at meeting at Foster and Scituate; the

former a low time ; my mind still clothed with mourning ; the evening meeting was a good one, and my head was lifted above the waves. May my soul bow in awful prostration before the Lord for his extension of mercy in raising me from that state of suffering to the place where I could sing of his mercies.

Set out in the morning for Coventry, and had a meeting appointed there in the evening, which, I trust, was a time of instruction.

Fifth-day, at meeting at Cranston, a favored time ; and feeling drawings in my mind to Warwick, had a meeting there in the evening, which was a season of renewed favor. May the Lord be praised for all his works, for He alone is worthy.

Sixth-day, attended Greenwich and Wickford, to satisfaction ; the former would have been more so had due care been taken in extending notice as desired.

Seventh-day, at Richmond in the afternoon ; the life of religion very low, being very hard to come at any settlement ; yet, in time the spring opened ; and the meeting ended well. A noted Baptist minister observed to me " he supposed I was on a religious visit through this country." I told him I was. He replied, " That good Master you have been telling us about will give you your reward ; may He strengthen you in it. I think I love Him, but I often feel very cold *here* (raising his hand to his breast), but I think it is for want of watching unto prayer."

First-day, at Hopkinton, where I was led to set forth the necessity of knowing the fallow-ground broken up, whereby the seed of the kingdom might grow and bring forth fruit, " some thirty, some sixty, and some one hundred-fold." Dined with our dear friend, John Wilbur,

and attended a meeting at Pawtucket in the evening, to a good degree of satisfaction.

Second-day forenoon, at Westerly, which was a good meeting; and at South Kingston in the afternoon, where the blessed Master was near.

Third-day, at meeting on the Island of Conanicut, in which the good Shepherd was pleased to be near, and enabled me to declare the "unsearchable riches of Christ." In the course of the meeting, I was led to speak of the nature and qualification of a true gospel ministry; and after the close, a Baptist man said: "You have been telling us about the right qualification for a gospel ministry. I am convinced there is no other; may the Lord strengthen you in the work. I have been comforted, I can truly say, though I feel that I am an unprofitable servant." May the praise be given to Him who is our adorable Leader, for his works alone can praise Him. Crossed over to Rhode Island, in order to attend the Quarterly Meeting at Portsmouth; lodged at John Mitchell's, and attended the Select Meeting on Fourth-day, which was a very exercising time.

Fifth-day, 1st of Eighth Month.—Attended the Quarterly Meeting. My mind was clothed with mourning, because of the low state of the Church; but was favored to find relief. Rode to Fall River in the afternoon, and lodged at Thomas Wilbur's, who has been very agreeably with us for several days.

Sixth-day, at Freetown, to satisfaction. On arriving at Luther Linkin's, in the evening, I learned there were a few members of our Society thereaway; and feeling my mind drawn towards them, had them together at 8 o'clock, and hope it was a profitable season.

First-day, attended Uxbridge and Northbridge Meetings; and if I was favored with a true sense of the state

thereof, religion is at a low ebb, though there is a seeking remnant; and, I hope, to *these* they were profitable seasons. When about to leave our lodging-place in the morning, it seemed to me unsafe to proceed, as I felt my mind drawn towards a company of persons who had become uneasy with the forms and creaturely activity of the Methodist society, and had been in the practice of meeting together in silence to wait upon God. We had a meeting among them at 10 o'clock. Many of them appeared to be in a seeking state, and I trust it was not an unprofitable season to them.

Third-day, at Leicester and Worcester Meetings; the former a laborious time; in the latter, the state of religion appeared very low.

Fourth-day, rode to Bolton, in order to attend Smithfield Quarterly Meeting there, having our kind Friend, Josiah Shove, of Uxbridge, for pilot, in his eighty-fourth year. At the Select Quarterly Meeting, in the evening, was a time of "searching the camp;" but the reward of peace was mercifully extended.

Fifth-day, the Quarterly Meeting for Discipline, which was an exercising time; the blessed Master was pleased to be near, and to strengthen for allotted duty. I find it cheering to meet with Friends by the way, who love the Truth; and feel, under a renewed evidence of the presence of the "Son of Peace," that the language may be adopted, "Peace be to this house."

Seventh-day, at meeting at Richmond; a very low time. My mind was clothed with mourning, under a belief that the cause of Truth was suffering in this place; though in some honest labor among them, I felt peace. On setting forward early the next morning, it was, as to the outward, a morning without clouds. The whole creation wore a

beautiful appearance ; and through Divine mercy, the inward bore a near resemblance thereto. An awful silence covered my mind ; and the sweet distillations of the heavenly dew refreshed my spirit. My dear wife and children were brought near, and through immediate help, ability was received to again intercede on her behalf in the various trials which attend her, that He who has been pleased to cause this separation, might be near to support and comfort her by his good spirit. Oh, the breathings of my soul on her behalf, as also that of our dear children, that He would preserve them from evil, and cause the seed of the Kingdom to grow in their hearts. This centered in again committing them to his protecting care, whose mercies are indeed over all his works. Many of my dear friends at, and about home, came separately and collectively, fresh in my remembrance, with living aspirations on their behalf. Tears flowed for miles, while Divine and heavenly harmony pervaded my mind. May my soul bow before Him, and offer the tribute of thanksgiving and praise.

Reached Weare in good season, and experienced a time of favor. In the afternoon, at North Weare, which was not so satisfactory as the former ; though, I trust, it was a season of instruction to some.

Second-day, had a meeting at Henniker, to satisfaction, and set out in the afternoon for Lynn, in order to attend Salem Quarterly Meeting, to be held there, where we arrived on Third-day evening, and were kindly received.

Here he wrote to his wife, as follows :—

Eighth Month 14th, 1839.

My dear and precious Wife :—I again salute thee in near and tender affection, which is unabated, though a vast distance separates us, and at this time runs through



my heart to thee and our dear children. I received thy very acceptable letter, which was like a brook by the way, a great comfort to me that thou art favored to bear up so well; and yet I know thou hast a great charge resting upon thee. I feel it to be a great mercy, in the midst of many trials, that, as thou observed, such an evidence of peace is granted to us, that the present engagement is of Divine requisition; it bears up the mind, and makes hard things more easy: indeed, such an evidence of the presence of my Divine Master is in mercy given me, that I cannot wish it any other way than it is, although I very sensibly feel this long separation. But my blessed Master knows that I love Him above all, and in his own time, I trust, He will restore us to each other. \* \* \* I was also pleased to hear from our farm, and things relative thereto, and feel thankful to Him "who daily loadeth us with his benefits." \* \* \* This brings to mind very freshly a circumstance that occurred some years ago. While on my way to Short Creek Quarterly Meeting, my mind was solemnly impressed with the prospect of its being required of me to leave my dear wife and children; and for a time, I thought: how could that be? being in limited circumstances, and having a large family who were dependent upon me, together with the separation from my dear companion. And whilst musing thereupon, the language ran through my mind: "If thou wilt give up to follow me wheresoever I shall lead thee, I will be a husband to thy wife, and a father to thy children, and they shall not want in thy absence." I mention this for thy encouragement, without making more of it than I ought, for I feel myself one of the least of the family, yet thankful to Him for his watchful care, both at *home* and over *us*. \* \* \* My mind is often clothed with mourning on account of the

many deviations from primitive purity; the young people are soaring above the Divine witness in their own minds. I have felt it my duty to deal plainly with them, delivering what appeared to be the "whole counsel."

In dear love, &c.,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Fourth-day, attended the select Quarterly Meeting at Salem, which was a time of close searching of heart. Our dear friends T. and E. Robson, were again with us. My gracious Master was pleased to be near to strengthen for His service. In the Meeting for Discipline on Fifth-day, my mind was clothed with mourning on account of a spirit of insubordination that is lurking in secret places, on the subject of the abolition of slavery. I have marvelled to see the working of the mystery of iniquity, in drawing off the members of our Society into the maxims and policy of the world; and *that too*, under the specious pretence of the good work of relieving the oppressed, in a way that they will be in great danger of swerving from the peaceable, non-resistant principles of the gospel. I am more and more convinced that our safety depends upon our keeping near our holy Head; in a religious body together; supporting our various testimonies in the good old way - not joining with those who are always ready. The language of our blessed Lord applies: "My time has not yet come; your time is always ready." But to the praise of our holy Head, be it spoken, there is a power above every other power, that chained down all opposing spirits, and the meeting ended well. Took leave of our dear friends in much feeling, and rode to a meeting appointed for our friend E. Robson, which I trust was a time of instruction to many. She

feeling a concern towards the ministers and elders of this place, I united with her therein, which opportunity, I hope, will not soon be forgotten. Taking leave of many dear friends, in near affection, we rode to West Newbury, and lodged.

Seventh-day, at meeting there in the forenoon, to satisfaction, and at Amesbury in the afternoon, and although my mind underwent much exercise on account of a mistake in the notice of the hour of meeting, I felt the life to arise towards the close, and the meeting ended well.

At Seabrook the life of religion was at a low ebb, yet strength was afforded to leave the burden where it belonged. I left in peace, and rode to Epping, and lodged.

Second-day, had a meeting there, a time of favor, I trust, to some. Third-day, attended Monthly Meeting at Dover, which was a low, trying time; and feeling my mind drawn to have a public meeting, notice was given for one in the evening, which was also trying and laborious; my faith seemed almost to fail for a time, but through divine mercy ability was experienced to leave the exercise with them.

Fourth-day, rode to North Berwick to attend Dover Quarterly Meeting. The Select Meeting convened at two o'clock, which was an exercising season. The Meeting for Discipline occurred on Fifth-day, which was a time of renewed favor. E. R. and D. W. had good service. My mind, however, was much affected with the unsettlement which occurred at the closing of the shutters, occasioned by the greater part of the meeting going out; which I have noticed to be much the case in many places. I found it my duty to tell them of it, and to show them the disadvantage it was to such meetings. Meetings for

Discipline are not viewed by many with that dignity that is consistent with the subject. O, that Zion might arise and shake herself from the dust of the earth! I think I never was so filled with mourning over her, on account of the spirit of the world which has blinded the minds of many, as since being in this land; and yet renewed evidences are granted of the continued care of the Shepherd of Israel, in visiting again and again for our restoration.

Sixth-day, at Oakwoods and Elliot. In the first my blessed Master enabled me to throw off the exercise, though I had to mourn over the lifeless state of some present. I trust it was a season that will be remembered by some. The latter was owned by the Shepherd of Israel, under whose preparing power, I trust, the doctrines of the gospel were a little opened. After meeting, a Presbyterian who was there, acknowledged to the truth of what was said, saying, "I fully believe the doctrine of the striving of the Holy Spirit in man, that it is freely offered to all." He observed that Friends felt very near to him, that they had never felt so near before; and manifested great tenderness in parting with us, saying, "Brethren, pray for us."

Seventh-day, at Lower Rochester; a relieving time. In the afternoon, at Chestnut Hill; a very poor meeting. I was led to compare their situation with that of Israel when in such a deplorable condition; the prophets of Baal being four hundred, and the Lord's prophet himself alone; but the Lord was pleased to be with him, and to open a way to try their idol worship. Through holy help I was favored to relieve my mind, though clothed with mourning.

He again writes to his wife, as follows:—

Eighth Month 24th, 1839.

My dearly beloved Wife:—I received thy very welcome messenger, the value of which can only be estimated by those who have been placed in like circumstances. I may inform thee that my dear companion received intelligence of the illness of his daughter Sarah, about ten days ago; and in a few days after additional intelligence of her continued illness, and possibly not long survival; which was a close trial; and on deliberating thereon, with the unity and sympathy of many dear friends, he concluded to leave me and go home. He took leave of me yesterday morning and went in company with our dear friend Daniel Wheeler, who is going to attend Ohio Yearly Meeting. It was a close trial to give him up, but the feeling I had for his family was such that I could not hold him from going to see them, with a prospect of his returning should it appear to be right. I feel the loss, but the blessed Master has been pleased to be near. Do not be too much concerned about it, for I am among very kind friends. I have the company of John Buffum, of North Berwick, and I trust I shall be favored to get along. If my gracious Master will be pleased to continue to preserve and support me, and enable me to get through to the peace of my mind, my tongue will be too short to set forth his praise. \* \* \* I was pleased with the good account of the children. I want you, dear children, to remember that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to depart from evil is a good understanding.” Be willing to submit to the restraints of the Spirit of Truth, and you will be preserved out of evil. I can say to you that plainness, as becomes the

followers of a meek and crucified Saviour, never appeared to me more beautiful than of latter time. I want you in my absence, to pay due regard to the judgment of your dear mother.

When in Salem, Massachusetts, I went to see a woman who had nervous spasms in such quick succession as to raise her in a sitting posture, and then throw her back on her bed with great violence. She has not been known to be asleep in eight years so as not to hear the clock strike. She has been convinced of the Truth, as professed by Friends, since she has been in this condition, and uses the plain language. She seemed much pleased to see us, and would converse sensibly between spasms. She said the Lord had been good to her. I thought her case a remarkable one. Her name is Sarah Purbeck.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

First-day, at Meadsborough, which was an open time. At New Durham in the evening, to satisfaction.

Second-day, at Pittsfield, which, I trust, was a season of instruction, though the seed of Life is under suffering.

Third-day, at Gilmanton Meeting, which was a season of favor. Rode to Wolfsborough in the evening, and lodged at Lindley M. Hoag's, and attended their meeting on Fourth-day; which was a low time. Silence was my lot among them. Rode from thence to South Sandwich; passed in view of Winnepisiogee Lake, a very magnificent scene, surrounded by rough highlands, and dotted with numerous islands. The lake is said to be thirty miles in length, and contains 365 islands. The beauty and excellency, as well as the greatness and power of the eternal Jehovah, are displayed in his works.

Fifth-day, at South Sandwich and North Sandwich



Meetings, which were well attended; and, I trust, through Divine mercy, the good cause did not suffer. Set out early in the morning of Sixth-day to Parsonsfield, and arrived in time to attend a meeting there, appointed for our dear friend, E. Robson, wherein she had good service. Rode in the evening to Cornish, and had a meeting in a school-house on Seventh day. My mind was turned in a lively manner towards my dear friends at home, this being the day of our Select Yearly Meeting. May our Holy Head be near to strengthen and refresh them by his life-giving presence, enabling them again and again to rejoice therein, that the whole heritage may be watered, and Zion arise in her ancient beauty. Oh! mayest thou be pleased to arise in power, and scatter the clouds that hang over thy heritage, for "strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand;" that thy people may, through thy power, go forth in thy great and glorious work, that thy poor, who depend on thee, may be sustained in every trial that may be permitted. Oh! be thou a spirit of judgment to those who sit in judgment; and "strength to them that turn the battle to the gate;" that every spirit that would lead off from the doctrines of the Gospel, as thou hast opened them to us, may be kept down, that thy people may rejoice in thee, for thou art worthy of all praise and glory, forever. Amen.

First-day, 1st of Ninth Month.—We attended meeting at Parsonsfield, to satisfaction; and in the afternoon were at Limington Meeting, which was large, many of the inhabitants of the town coming in. For a time there seemed to be very little settlement of mind, so that my faith almost failed me; but as I endeavored to centre my mind on my gracious Master, a little light sprang up, and strength was given to arise with these words: "Be still, and know that

I am God ;” and matter arose in my mind as fast as I was able to utter it. A very solemn feeling was spread over us, and the meeting ended well. May the praise be given unto Him from whom all strength cometh.

Third-day, were at Falmouth in the forenoon, and at Portland in the evening ; where, if I am not deceived, the life of religion was very low. After the public service was over, I requested the members to stop ; when I felt it my duty to address them plainly. Oh, the lukewarmness of many under our name, whereby they are an easy prey to the enemy, who “divides in Jacob, and scatters in Israel.”

Fourth-day, attended the Select Quarterly Meeting, which was an exercising time. In the evening had a meeting at Gorham, to satisfaction.

Fifth-day, attended the Quarterly Meeting at Falmouth, which, though a time of deep exercise, was a season of renewed favor. The doctrines of the Gospel, I trust, were opened in some degree of authority.

First-day, at Leeds ; a poor little meeting. The blessed Master enabled me to leave the burden with them ; though my mind was clothed—as it often is—with mourning, on account of the lukewarm state of many of our members.

In the afternoon, at Winthrop, to satisfaction. Went from meeting to the house of Ezra Briggs, where a number of Friends came ; and among them a person who appeared to be under conviction. A time of free conversation ensued, which, I hope, may prove useful. I found he was dissatisfied with the forms and ceremonies of the Calvinistic Baptist society, of which he was a member. I desired him to attend to the light of Christ in his own heart, which had raised in him a desire for something

more substantial, and it would lead him in the way of life and peace.

Third-day, at meeting at Hallowell; a time of renewal of strength.

Fourth-day, attended Select Meeting at Vassalborough. The good Master was near to strengthen for service required.

My mind has for some time been under exercise from an apprehension that it was required of me to go to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia; which has been a very close trial, having been so long from my dear family already. After having passed several, mostly sleepless nights, I fully believe it my duty to stand resigned thereto. I have already ventured to counsel with some of my friends respecting it, and have received their cordial unity and sympathy, through which I feel encouraged, and think of laying it before the select members to-morrow.

Here follows an extract of a letter, written to his wife at this time.

Vassalborough, State of Maine, Ninth Month 12th, 1839.

My dearly beloved Wife:—I again resume the only method in my power of paying the tribute that tender love prompts me very strongly to, and may inform thee that my health is good; and having taken it a little more leisurely for some days past, feel rested. Thy acceptable letter, together with one from brother John, were very reviving to my drooping spirits. I thought the day before I received thine, if I could get good accounts from home, I could go on pretty cheerfully, and my desire was remarkably answered. It was humbling to me to see the kindness of Friends to thee and our dear children; my pen cannot describe the feelings of my heart. I was glad

to hear of thy being at Yearly Meeting, though rather unexpected. It was a great satisfaction to learn that thy health has been good. I do not want thee to expose thyself by attending to things too hard for thee, but rather leave it till thou can get some one to attend to it. Thy expression of a desire that we may be preserved in the patience, was strengthening to me; and I desire *thy* prayers, together with those of the living in Israel, that faith and patience may hold out. And now I may inform thee, that of latter time the way towards Canada, as expressed in a former letter, seems hedged up, and Nova Scotia set open before me. I may acknowledge that my Master pointed out to me before leaving home, *that* part of his footstool; but as I progressed in the service in this land, I flattered myself that I should be excused, particularly as our dear friends, Daniel Wheeler and John D. Lang, were there only a few months ago; but on coming to Vassalborough, I could see no way but to stand resigned to the service. Dear John Warren, who is a father in the Church, said to me: "My spirit will go with thee." My dear, thou can understand the depth of this exercise better than I can describe it; but my gracious Master has been with me in many trials, and has supported me in this journey beyond anything I could expect; and shall I not follow Him? I have visited nearly all the meetings of New England Yearly Meeting, except some in this quarter which are before me, previous to going east.

Sixth-day morning, 13th.—I attended the Quarterly Meeting at this place yesterday, which was a favored one; and after its close, the select members met, before whom I laid the concern above noticed, and entire unity and sympathy was expressed with me therein, and encouragement given me to attend thereto, which I felt to increase my

strength. James Jones informed the meeting, that he had for some time felt his mind drawn that way, but had not seen any way to proceed, till now he felt willing to offer to bear me company ; which is very agreeable to me, and satisfactory to Friends. And now I can say, I feel comfortable, and expect to set out in about a week. I noticed thy remarks respecting our meeting. My desires for my dear friends at, and about home, are that there may be a settling down in the quiet, for "in quietness and confidence" Divine strength is known, which will enable us to "leave the things that are behind, and press forward," where the blessed experience is given of the "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

I must draw to a close, in near and dear love to thee, feeling nearly united in the covenant of life, wherein I rest thy loving husband, and companion in tribulations, and in some degree, I trust, of the "faith and patience of Jesus Christ."

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Left my dear friend, Daniel Taber's, and rode to China to a meeting, in the forenoon of Sixth-day ; and in the afternoon, to South China ; both favored meetings, especially the latter. Lodged at the house of Ephraim Jones, where we had the company of many dear Friends, to our mutual comfort.

Seventh-day, rode to Hope, and attended a meeting at 3 o'clock, where the life of religion was very low ; though for the sake of a few present (as it appeared to me), a little opening seemed to arise, and, I trust, the opportunity will be of advantage to them. Lodged at the house of D. Lincoln, on the way to Brooks, and arrived there in time for meeting on First-day, which was large, and mercifully

owned by the Master of assemblies; and ability was given to declare the "unsearchable riches of Christ," in some degree of the "demonstration of the Spirit, and of power." May the Lord's name be praised, for it is his own works alone that can praise Him.

Second-day, attended Monthly Meeting at Brooks; a time of favor. Dear T. and E. Robson were present. Attended a meeting of E. Robson's, in the evening, which was large, and, I trust, a profitable season to some.

Third-day, at China Monthly Meeting, which was an exercising time; but through the Lord's mercy, relief was obtained.

Fourth-day, at Vassalborough Monthly Meeting, held at East Pond, which was a time of renewed exercise; yet, through the Lord's mercy, peace was the reward for allotted service.

Fifth-day, at Monthly Meeting at Fairfield, to satisfaction.

Sixth-day, set out towards the Province of New Brunswick, in company with my dear friend, James Jones, in accordance with our afore-mentioned prospect, with Stephen Jones as assistant companion. Rode to D. Lincoln's and lodged; crossed the Penobscot River at Bucksport, and reached Ailsworth late in the evening and lodged.

First-day morning, feeling our minds drawn towards the inhabitants of the town, a meeting was appointed for this afternoon, which was well attended, and resulted to pretty good satisfaction.

Second-day, 23d, proceeded to Columbiana, and feeling our minds drawn towards the inhabitants of that place, a meeting was appointed, to be held in the evening; and, I trust, through Divine mercy, ability was given to declare the "unsearchable riches of Christ."



24th.—At Sheldon Gray's. He and his wife being measurably convinced of the principles of Friends; and they, together with several others who are in a seeking state, having been in the practice of meeting and sitting down in silence as Friends do, and we feeling our minds drawn towards them, had a meeting appointed in the evening, wherein I was led to direct their attention to that Divine Teacher in the heart, where they might find the "minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord hath pitched, and not man," able to open unto them the mysteries of the Kingdom. The meeting ended well. May the Lord be pleased to be near and strengthen them to walk in his ways. I felt glad in believing that the Lord is visiting even in the remote corners of the earth.

25th.—Had a meeting in the evening in a neighborhood eight miles distant from the last-named place, whereto a number of serious people came; and although no meeting of Friends had ever before been held there, they sat very orderly, and the meeting was satisfactory.

26th.—Lodged again at S. Gray's, and may truly say, as it has been in the outward to-day, so has it been in the inward; a cloudy and stormy time. I have had to recur to the time when I was strengthened to open this prospect to Friends of Vassalborough, and the feeling unity I received, as well as sympathy in the concern, which was a strength to me; and the craving desire of my heart is, that the good Shepherd may be pleased to lead and preserve me on every hand, so that I may be enabled to move on in his service in all humility of mind, keeping a single eye to his directions. My soul feels it to be a very awful service to be engaged in—going from place to place

—and I can say, “hitherto the Lord hath helped me.” May his great name be exalted, now and forever.

27th.—Had a meeting at Coopers, which was small, on account of notice not having been properly given ; but, I trust, it was a season of profit to some. In the evening we were at Crawford, where the people gave but little evidence of being acquainted with the nature of Divine worship. I felt it my duty to open to them the true substance of it, and point out the necessity of coming to the experimental work of religion in the heart, short of which, all our pretensions thereto would prove in vain.

First-day, 29th.—At a meeting at Milltown, in the forenoon, in which the people appeared unsettled, and unacquainted with true spiritual worship. In the afternoon, at Calais, which was, through holy Help, a profitable season ; strength being given to declare the “unsearchable riches of Christ.” May the praise be given to Him “who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.”

30th.—Rode to St. George, and lodged, and had a meeting there the next day, which, though small, was a comfortable time ; and in the evening, had an open, good meeting at Pennsfield.

Fourth-day, 2d of Tenth Month.—Rode to St. John’s, and lodged in a vessel that had for twenty years traversed the mighty deep, and was then taken up with high tide as far as it could be, and there stationed, chimneys built, plastered, &c., making a comfortable house.

Here he wrote to his wife, from which the following extract is taken :—

St. Johns, Province of New Brunswick,

Tenth Month 3d, 1839.

My dearly beloved Wife:—I again resort to the only

means in my power of communicating to thee the tenderest feelings that flow from the heart of an absent bosom friend; and may inform thee, my health is good, for which I desire ever to be thankful; as to poor travellers, it is an inestimable blessing. But to feel the sustaining arm of Israel's shepherd to be underneath, while submitting to the various baptisms and trials that are the portion of those who go forth in an embassy like the present, is above all things else to be desired; which, through adorable mercy, has been my experience; though unworthy of the least of his favors. I have, in company with my companions, felt drawn towards the inhabitants of several towns and villages through which we have passed, and have had meetings with them, which was very exercising to me; but may acknowledge, that "hitherto the Lord hath helped." May praise be ascribed unto Him "who is strength in weakness, riches in poverty, and a present help in every time of need." I have found in many places in this remote corner of the earth, a tender-hearted people, and a great openness towards Friends, which is very comfortable and encouraging. John Warren and James Jones, having travelled through here before, Friends have thereby become better known, and the way more easy than it otherwise might have been. \* \* \* I cannot describe the feelings of my heart towards thee, in remembrance of the many cares, exercises and trials, which are thy lot. But it has been a comfort to me to believe that the sustaining arm of Israel's Shepherd has been thy support. O, may He continue to be near, and preserve us in the covenant of life! that when, in the ordering of his good providence we may be permitted to meet again, it may be under a feeling thereof, to the praise of his great and holy name.

Dear children! may you be careful to live in his fear from day to day, trying to do nothing but that which brings peace to your minds; and thus you will experience the “work of righteousness to be peace, and the effect thereof quietness and assurance forever;” watching over your own spirits, desiring that you may be enabled to live as becomes the meek and lowly Lamb of God. But when you feel a disposition to have things a little different from what your parents wish—a little like some other young people have—remember that our dear Redeemer has set us an example of simplicity. He wore a garment without a seam; and He leads his followers into plainness—into the “straight and narrow way.” I am comforted in believing that the Lord has visited some of you, and given you at times to feel the emptiness of all things here below, and raised desires that you might live in his fear. Attend to these impressions, dear children, and you will be a comfort to your dear mother; and the Lord will bless you, and bring you forward in the way in which He would have you to walk, to your own peace. I must conclude, having a meeting appointed at this place this evening. I remain, thy loving husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

4th.—Attended an appointed meeting at St. Johns last evening, which was large, and I trust, through holy help, the blessed cause of Truth did not suffer by it. We crossed the Bay of Fundy to-day, which proved to be a boisterous time, yet through the superintending care of a gracious Providence, we got safely over, landing at Annapolis.

5th.—Rode to Bridgetown, Annapolis, to Joseph Fitz Randolph, and in the evening had a meeting in a school-

house, which was small in consequence of the notice not having been properly spread.

First-day, the 6th.—Had a meeting on the north side of Granville Mountain, at a place called The Cove; where there are a few professing with Friends who sometimes meet together to worship. Public notice was given, and the blessed Master was pleased to be near and favor us with a tendering opportunity. In the evening we had a meeting at Bridgetown, which was much crowded, and, I trust, a little strength was given to declare the “unsearchable riches of Christ” to the people. May my soul ever bow at the feet of Him who doeth the works.

7th.—Had a meeting about six miles down the Bay at a Methodist Meeting-house; and another in the evening at the Ferry, to good satisfaction.

8th.—Were at a meeting at Parker’s Cove, wherein I was silent; but dear James had acceptable service. In the evening, at Young’s Cove, which was a favored meeting. Next day called to see the widow Willet and her daughter; the former appeared in a seeking state; the latter under much discouragement. I trust it was a season to be remembered. Rode to our kind friend, J. R.’s, and had a meeting about four miles up the Bay, and lodged with Joseph Fitz Randolph.

10th.—Set out toward Wilmot, where we arrived about noon; and feeling our minds drawn towards the inhabitants of the town, we had a meeting in the evening to satisfaction.

Had a meeting on Sixth-day evening at Elijah Finney’s, which was a fresh trial to me, as it always appears to be a very solemn thing to appoint a meeting; yet, through holy help, truth reigned. May the praise be ascribed unto Him who is the blessed helper of his people.

Seventh-day, 12th.—Started on our way towards Pictou; and after near five days' travel, arrived on Fourth-day, the 16th, and were very kindly received, which we felt to be a comfort.

Here he again wrote to his wife, the following being an extract thereof:—

Pictou, Province of Nova Scotia,  
Tenth Month 18th, 1839.

My dearly beloved Wife:—In the feeling of dear love I again salute thee; being at the house of very kind friends, and in good health; which has been, through divine mercy, mostly permitted. I took some cold while crossing the Bay of Fundy, the wind blowing so cold that I became quite chilly, but the vessel was so tossed that for some time I thought it unsafe to leave my seat to go and get my overcoat. It was a very awful view of the great deep, but my mind was preserved mostly in the calmness, not at all doubting that we should get safe to land. \* \* \* May my soul bow in prostration before Him for his many mercies, and deliverances in various ways. I can truly acknowledge that “hitherto the Lord hath helped,” and though trials variously do attend, yet the “times of refreshing” are still permitted in due season to come from his holy “presence;” so that, at times, I could have said: “It is enough!”

We found a few individuals near Annapolis who hold a meeting for worship on First-days, and seem very glad to see Friends. I hope they are willing to be helped, which I thought they had need of. There is great openness towards Friends in many places; they see the beauty of it, but the cross is in the way. They cannot be Friends in reality without giving up the friendships, the flatteries



and profits of the world; and, therefore, many remain halting between two opinions; their better judgment being convinced of the way of Truth, but yet not willing to submit to its power. There are a few honest-hearted Friends in this place, but they seem rather unsettled, some having gone away, and others expecting to go in the spring.

Thy loving husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Seventh-day, the 19th.—Had a meeting in the town of Pictou, which was small; and the next day attended the meeting of Friends there, which was a good one, the Lord's power being present. In the evening we had one a few miles distant, in a Presbyterian meeting-house, which was a time of favor.

Set out on the morning of the 22d towards St. Johns, and arrived at Pedigo-Jack on the 25th, and feeling our minds drawn towards the inhabitants, we had a meeting appointed, to be held in the evening, which was a trying one for a considerable part of the time. The people appeared to be very little acquainted with true worship. After James Jones sat down, I felt called upon to open to them the nature of Divine worship, and the way of life and salvation; and the close was more comfortable.

We pursued our journey, and arrived at the city of St. Johns the 28th, and crossed the river St. Johns. My mind having been for some time much tried, soon after getting again seated in the carriage, I read a chapter in the New Testament, and turning inward unto Him who is the Helper of his people, I soon felt a holy canopy to cover my spirit, wherein strength was given to prostrate myself before Him on behalf of his Church and people in

every part of his heritage; that He would be their stay and their staff in every time of trial; particularly that He might be near, and preserve our Society on that foundation upon which He was pleased to gather and settle it in the beginning. The different classes were brought fresh and lively to my remembrance, with fervent breathings of soul for the advancement of the dear Redeemer's kingdom. Many dear Friends were brought individually before me, and in a particular manner, my dear wife and children, with desires that He would keep them in the "hollow of his holy hand," and enable her, the beloved companion of my life, to bear up in my absence, comfort her in her many trials, be near unto and preserve those tender lambs committed to our care, that they might live in his fear; that his holy hand might be turned upon them; and that we might all be washed in the "laver of regeneration." During this interval tears flowed freely, and my heart was made to rejoice in the fresh extensions of Divine mercy. May eternal praise be returned unto Him, who is worthy, forevermore.

Sixth-day, 1st of Eleventh Month.—Set off in the morning, but had not travelled far when the hind axletree of our carriage broke, and I, with the assistance of my friends, made a rough one, having little to work with besides an axe. We then continued our journey, and travelled thirty-four miles that day. I felt renewedly thankful to the Preserver of men for his watchful care over us, for had our axle been permitted to break in the night, while going down some of the hills, the danger would have been imminent. May my soul praise Him for his mercies and many deliverances. We arrived on First-day evening at Brooks, and had a meeting at Thorndyke the next day, wherein I was drawn to lay before the members

of our Society present, the necessity of faithfulness in the various branches of our testimonies. The reward of peace was granted. In the evening, sat with the few Friends at Unity, and such of the neighbors as were willing to attend; to the relief and peace of my mind. Attended a meeting at Albion on Third-day, which was a time of renewed favor.

Fourth-day, the 6th.—Had a meeting in the morning at the Neck, to satisfaction; and from thence went to Vassalborough to attend the Select Quarterly Meeting, in which my mind was introduced into deep exercise on behalf of ministers and elders, desiring that they might be enabled to dwell where ability is received to labor successfully in the church of Christ. Ministers thus abiding would be strengthened to go forth in his service to the honor of his name, experiencing the “Lord’s vestments” to cover the whole man, whereon is the “bell and the pomegranate,” and the former not to be heard without the latter. My mind was clothed with sadness, under a sense of the low state of the ministry in this part of the heritage.

Here he again writes, an extract of which follows:—

Vassalborough, Eleventh Month 7th, 1839.

My dearly beloved Wife:—I may inform thee that I am now at Daniel Taber’s, in good health; arrived safely here yesterday, after an absence of about six weeks. We travelled 1,250 miles, and had twenty-five meetings. I can acknowledge that on returning I felt so much relieved, and so comfortable, that the travel did not seem hard. \* \* \* When I got here I met William Dewees, and a very pleasant meeting it was. He seems to have had rather a lonesome time, though Friends were very kind to him. I may inform thee, my dear, that it is still

my impression that my services are drawing towards a close at this time, which I esteem a great favor from Him who is a good Master ; unto whom thou, as well as I, can appeal in the language : “ Lord, thou knowest all things ; thou knowest that I love thee.” A mercy, indeed, that I may be permitted to return to my dear family, and take a part of thy heavy burden. \* \* \* Hoping ere long to have a more comfortable way of conversing with thee, I conclude, and remain,

Thy affectionate husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Fifth-day, the 7th.—Attended the Quarterly Meeting, the fore part of which was rather trying ; but in the latter part life arose, and strength was furnished me to throw off the burden that rested upon me ; closing with tender counsel to some of the young who were under the forming Hand for service, that they might not come forth too soon, believing that some have thereby injured themselves, as well as the cause ; whereas, had they been willing to “ sit alone, and keep silence,” they would have grown in the root of life, and came forth as valiants in their day, to the honor of our holy Head, and to the peace of their own minds.

9th.—At a meeting at St. Albans ; an open time.

First-day, 10th.—Were at Athens. The meeting was rather a trying one, and was rendered, as I thought, more so by some unsavory offerings ; but the reward of peace was given for the allotted portion of service. On arriving at New Sharon, where a few members reside, and feeling my mind drawn towards them, we had notice given for a meeting at 6 o'clock in the evening. After which, we rode to Wilton, and had a meeting with the few Friends

there the next day, which was a season of renewed favor. In the evening had another meeting at New Sharon, to good satisfaction. Lodged, and set out the next morning for Belgrade, where we arrived in time for a meeting in the evening, which, through the mercy of Israel's Shepherd, was a favored time. May my soul bow before the Lord in awful reverence, and praise Him for his manifold mercies and blessings. My mind, in the prospect of before long being released from further service at this time, feels peaceful and thankful for the favor. Oh, that all within me may bless and praise his holy name!

14th.—At Sidney, which was a good meeting. Lodged at John Pope's, and in the morning had an opportunity in the family, which I hope will be remembered.

Sixth-day, 15th, at Litchfield, wherein the Lord was pleased to manifest his love afresh unto his people.

First-day, 17th, attended Durham Meeting, which was large, and graciously owned by the blessed Head of the Church, to the refreshing of our hearts; and Truth reigned over all. May eternal praises be ascribed unto Him, who, in a manner humbling to myself, has been pleased to be "strength in weakness, riches in poverty, and a present help in" the various exercises and trials that have been permitted in the course of this long and oft-burdened travel. My spirit bows before Him in thanksgiving and praise; feeling now peaceful and at liberty to turn towards home. Having sold our team and carriage, we intend going by public conveyance.

Nothing appears on record from this time to the date of the following letter:—

Barnesville, Ohio, Third Month 20th, 1840.

Dear friend Joseph Fitz-Randolph:—I have for some



time felt my mind drawn towards thee, and the few others professing with Friends in those parts; unto whom the visitations of my heavenly Father's love have been extended for your gathering into the true "sheep-fold," where the "Good Shepherd" might lead you forth in the "green pastures" of life, where the "streams" of that "river" that "makes glad the heritage," are the portion of the "sheep" and of the "lambs." I trust it is in a measure of that love that desires the gathering of the whole human family into this heavenly enclosure, that these lines are written; desiring that "grace, mercy and peace, from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ," "may increase and abound amongst you." And my dear friends, are we not called to great faithfulness to our God, who hath visited us by his day-spring from on high; and hath shown unto us that we must take up the cross and follow Him in the way of self-denial?

It was in this way that our worthy forefathers grew in the ever-blessed Truth; counting nothing too near or dear to part with for his great name's sake; and there is the same necessity for us at the present day, to be faithful to that witness for Him in our own hearts, with which we are favored. Permit me then to express the earnest desire of my heart for you, that ye may, through the power of an endless life, stand fast in the liberty wherewith the Lord's people are made free; counting it but a reasonable duty to give Him the whole heart. Here you will be led into great watchfulness over your spirits--over your daily conduct and conversation, that all may be as "becometh the gospel of Christ;" that "others beholding your good works"—the practical, unaffected piety of your lives,—may have cause to "glorify God in the day of visitation." O! I feel much for you in that part of the



heritage ; but am comforted in believing that the compassionate regard of Him who gathers the lambs with his arms, and carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those who are under religious exercise, is extended towards you.

May you keep inward and patient, seeking from day to day to be clothed with the Lord's holy fear ; and He will be near to you, even your wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption—will open to you more and more, those things which have been hid from the “wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes.” He will unfold to you the doctrines of the gospel of “our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”—a wonderful display of the love of our heavenly Father to his creature man. It was as our worthy predecessors were faithful, that they became more and more settled ; and they had great openings of the scriptures ; and were favored to see the spiritual nature of Christian worship ; for there was raised in them a desire for something more substantial than that which was in the wisdom and will of man ; even the living eternal Truth. And being thus gathered together after the manner of the primitive Christians, waiting for the promise of the Father ; there was opened to them a spring of living gospel ministry, on apostolic ground : “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God ; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.” And many able ministers were raised up who went forth under his eternal power, with great boldness and perseverance in the cause of our holy Redeemer—the “Prince of Peace, of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end.” O, that the glorious gospel day may more and more come ! when “strong nations afar off” may feel the “rebuke” of his power ;

and that every weapon for the destruction or injury of his creature man, may be destroyed ; or converted to promote his comfort and happiness ; that the “ knowledge of the Lord may cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.” That the word of the Lord, through his ancient servant, may be fulfilled, “ For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the gentiles ; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering.”

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

---

## CHAPTER V.

### ACCOUNT OF A RELIGIOUS VISIT TO INDIANA YEARLY MEETING AND SOME OF ITS BRANCHES.

HAVING for some time felt my mind drawn to attend Indiana Yearly Meeting, also a few meetings within its limits, I left home the 19th of Ninth Month, 1840 ; my dear friend Ralph Cowgill bearing me company. We reached Alum Creek Monthly Meeting on Second-day, the 21st, by hard driving, having thirty miles to travel in the morning before meeting.

It being late when we got in, we had no refreshment except what we had with us, until the meeting concluded, which was near five in the evening. But the satisfaction of being owned, as I humbly trust, by our gracious Master, bore up our minds in a good degree, above the sense of fatigue. The language of encouragement went forth to a tried remnant, who had been tossed and not comforted ; while, on the other hand, close dealing with some lifeless

professors was included in the mission given me to deliver. Here we fell in with dear A. B., whose company and services were strengthening and helpful to us.

Fourth-day, 23d, attended the select quarter at Goshen, wherein our good Master was pleased to manifest himself, to the comfort of the exercised travellers, as well as to the admonition of those who are not sufficiently sensible of the obligations, we, of this part of Society are under, to "take heed unto ourselves, and to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers." Were at the Quarterly Meeting for Discipline on Fifth-day, which, though an exercising time, the reward of peace was vouchsafed to us, poor and unworthy as we are.

First-day, 27th, attended meeting at Richmond. I was silent, but John Wood was extensively engaged; yet rather a laborious meeting. Had a meeting appointed at New Garden in the afternoon, which was a time of renewed favor. Returned to Richmond next morning to attend the Meeting for Sufferings.

Third-day, 29th, the Select Yearly Meeting opened, and notwithstanding many were clothed with mourning on account of the inroads which the enemy has made within the camp, in the midst thereof encouragement was received from the immediate extension of the presence of our holy Head.

At the public meeting on Fourth-day, dear E. R. was livingly engaged in testimony, which was suitably followed in supplication by J. Wood. The Meeting for Discipline commenced on Fifth-day and continued till Third-day following. On First-day, previous to the close, I attended the public meeting at Richmond in the forenoon, which, I trust, was a season of instruction to many; in the afternoon, at New Garden; a part of the Yearly

Meeting for worship being held there; both of which were crowded meetings, and in the latter, I trust, renewed ability was received to declare the “unsearchable riches of Christ;” and the meeting ended in prayer, thanksgiving and praise.

After the conclusion of the Yearly Meeting on Third-day, we took a solemn leave of many Friends, unto whom I felt nearly united. It has been a very exercising time on account of various things, and prominent amongst them is the abolition subject; a spirit that does not want to be circumscribed to the limitations of our holy Head, and keep together as a body: but are saying, “I pray thee, let me run.” The judgment of Truth was placed upon it; but I still fear that difficulty and distress will attend. The testimony which our holy Head has laid upon us to bear against slavery, is a righteous testimony; and it rests upon us with undiminished obligation to be faithful therein. But I am renewedly confirmed that the only safe way for us to move therein, is unitedly; and as shall be pointed out by our divine Master. Then may we look forward with hope and confidence, that in the Lord’s time our feeble efforts may be crowned with success.

Took leave of our dear friends T. and E. Robson and J. Wood, and left Richmond on Fourth-day morning; and on Fifth-day attended a meeting at Harveysburg, to satisfaction. Rode to Clarksville in the afternoon, and attended a meeting appointed for us at early candle light; which, I hope, was a season of instruction to some.

Sixth-day, 9th of Tenth Month.—We attended Springfield Meeting in the morning, which was small, owing to the notice not having been sufficiently circulated. In the afternoon, at Littres Creek, to good satisfaction; though

there was also some deficiency in the notice there; which concerned Friends regretted. I have often thought that great care should be taken that notice for such meetings should be given into the hands of trusty Friends that would attend promptly to it, as a failure therein very much frustrates the design.

Seventh-day, 10th, at Centre in the forenoon. Our gracious Master was near and gave ability to open the doctrines of the gospel unto the people, many of whom sat solidly. May the praise be ascribed unto Him who is "Head over all things unto his church." At Chester in the afternoon; soon after sitting down, the canopy of heavenly love was spread over us, and an open door was set before me to declare the "unsearchable riches of Christ;" showing, that in this gospel day, is fulfilled the ancient prophecy: "I will bring the blind by a way they know not; I will lead them in paths they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

First day, at Dover in the forenoon—an open, good meeting. In the afternoon, at Wilmington, to a good degree of satisfaction, though not so favored as that in the morning.

Set out for home the next day, where we arrived on Fifth-day the 15th, and found my dear family well, to our mutual comfort and thankfulness to Him who doeth all things well.

The following letter was written soon after his return home:—

Tenth Month 26th, 1840.

Dear Daughters:—I thought I could not well omit

availing myself of the present opportunity of sending you a token of paternal remembrance and regard. You are often fresh in my mind; attended with desires for your preservation and progress in your studies; so, notwithstanding we are not permitted to mingle together in the social circle, I doubt not we are often remembered by each other; and at times in that feeling which would inspire the language, "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob defend thee, send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion."

I may inform that I stood the fatigue of travelling quite as well as I could expect, and was favored to return with the reward of peace. \* \* \* Dear daughters! you know that the anxious desire of your dear father and mother, is that you may in your present situation be strengthened to walk circumspectly, not yielding to the suggestions of any to deviate from the plain way which Truth leads into; and you will, as you keep to it, realize that peace which the world, with all its fascinating amusements and pleasant pictures, cannot give, neither can it take it away from you; as you are faithful to the good Shepherd who will lead, feed and refresh in his heavenly fold; where there is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Letter to E. M.:—

Seventh Month 19th, 1842.

Dear friend E. M.:—I trust it is under feelings of deep interest in the welfare of our religious Society, that I have felt my mind drawn to communicate to thee, on the present occasion, what rests with me. And although the subject is a delicate one that I wish to bring into view for



thy consideration, yet I believe it is intimately connected with the prosperity of this people. I allude to the case of John Wilbur, which, I understand, has been under the care of the Yearly Meeting's committee, and referred by them to South Kingston Monthly Meeting. It appears evident to me that the moving cause of complaint exhibited against J. W., was his opposition to the doctrines, or sentiments, of J. J. Gurney. How far he may have acted imprudently, I know not; but I have myself been grieved to see so much countenance given to sentiments at variance with the doctrines of the Gospel, as received and upheld by us ever since the Lord first gathered us to be a people. And I hesitate not to say, that so far as that spirit is yielded to, which would have Quakerism changed, so as to a little better suit what is called the religious world, we shall grow weaker and weaker, and finally, the glory will depart from our Israel. It has indeed touched me in a very tender spot, to see in the writings of this individual (under the character of a minister of our religious Society), views differing very materially from those of George Fox, William Penn, Robert Barclay, and others; and even to call in question their Christian soundness. I believe the time will come when all this unsoundness will be judged down; though it will cause much deep suffering to the living, who dare not touch, taste, nor handle it, but are engaged to walk in the good old way, "earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints." I afresh remember the language of the prophet: "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined; and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say: It is my people; and they shall say: The Lord is my God."

My faith is unshaken in that Power that gathered us to be a people; and although trials, one after another, may be permitted to come upon the Church, yet a third part, after having been sufficiently brought through the fire, will be faithful to their God; not bowing to any image whatever, that may be set up; and thus, by his secret sustaining power, demonstrate the truth of the language: "It is my people;" and by our faithfulness in the maintenance of the testimonies which He has made it our duty to bear, say, "The Lord is my God." As I have understood the case of J. W. is postponed, permit me to speak the sincere desire of my heart to thee, as one for whom I have long entertained a high esteem, and say, be very careful how you proceed in that matter, lest you take a step that will throw your weight into the wrong scale, and thus greatly increase the difficulty in Society, and be a step, too, which the faithful members in other Yearly Meetings cannot recognize. The minds of many Friends in Ohio have been made sad on account of it. Oh, I desire the prosperity of your Yearly Meeting, as well as the prosperity of this people everywhere; and if we keep to the Truth, it will keep us in every part of the heritage, and we shall be of one heart, and of one soul, knowing our unity to be in Christ, the Seed; eating the same spiritual meat, and drinking the same spiritual drink, we shall become stronger and stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might. Ah, if Friends everywhere were such a lively and exercised people, defection in principle, as in practice, could never enter; all being sensible from whence we have been taken—even from the "hole of the pit"—would feel great responsibility resting upon us, to be faithful to our holy Head, showing forth the excellence of the gospel of Christ as we have learned of Him.

I drop these hints for thy perusal, with fervent desires that thou, as well as myself, together with Friends everywhere, may have their attention individually fixed upon our blessed and heavenly Master, where we shall all be engaged to keep to the ancient landmarks, the doctrines of the Gospel, as they were opened to our worthy forefathers, not conniving at anything to the contrary in others, and then the Church will be preserved in the unity, out of the party feeling, and know the blessedness of that state spoken of by the Psalmist: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

ACCOUNT OF A RELIGIOUS VISIT TO NEW YORK, CANADA,  
AND PHILADELPHIA, TAKING BALTIMORE YEARLY  
MEETING ON THE WAY.

HAVING felt my mind drawn in the love of the Gospel to visit the meetings of New York Yearly Meeting, and some of those of Philadelphia, taking Baltimore Yearly Meeting on the way, I left my dear wife and children the 13th of Tenth Month, 1842, under feelings of near affection, after a solemn season, wherein supplication was put up to our Heavenly Father for protection in our different

allotments; that through the various proving dispensations that might attend, we might be preserved in the hollow of his holy Hand.

Lodged at the house of my dear friend, Nathan P. Hall, who has given up to accompany me in the visit, with whom I set out on the 14th, and reached Westland the following evening. Called to see our dear friend, Mildred Ratcliff, who was in a low state of health, suffering much from a severe cough, but lively in spirit.

First-day, 16th.—Attended Redstone Meeting, in which the life of religion appeared lamentably low. I was favored to deliver what I apprehended to be required at my hands; and left in peace.

We set out on Second-day morning, 17th, towards Hopewell, in Virginia, and arrived on Fifth-day, 20th, and had a meeting at a small village called White Hall, the next evening; which was rather a low time; though, I trust, a season of instruction to some.

22d.—Had a meeting at Winchester, which, through the mercy of our God, proved a relieving, good meeting. May his great and eternal name be magnified and adored forever.

First-day, 23d, attended Hopewell Meeting at one o'clock, that being their meeting hour in consequence of the Hicksites having the use of the house in the forenoon. My divine Master, in his abundant mercy was pleased to be near and strengthen me to discharge the portion of allotted service. May my soul be kept in awful abasement, that everything that is of the creature may be kept in the dust, and his great and eternal name be exalted over all.

24th.—Rode to Jonas Jenney's, in the vicinity of Goose Creek; a house built many years ago by our friend

Jonathan Taylor. Here my mind was led to reflect on the low state of the church in this land ; which, with the distress attending the cruel system of slavery, clothes the mind with lamentation and mourning. May the most High, who ruleth in the kingdoms of men, arise for his own name and Truth's sake ; and hasten the coming of that day, when "righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

25th.—Had a meeting at South Fork, wherein strength was given to declare the "unsearchable riches of Christ," in this last and lasting dispensation. The meeting was small ; but, I trust, it was a season of instruction to those present.

26th.—At Goose Creek, to satisfaction ; and set off on Fifth-day morning towards Baltimore, where we arrived on Sixth-day evening, 28th, and were kindly received by Friends there.

The Select Yearly Meeting was held on Seventh-day, which was a time of great suffering under a superficial ministry.

First-day, 30th, the public meeting was held, which was a time of suffering on account of a lifeless ministry. In the afternoon, dear E. Evans, of Philadelphia, was acceptably engaged, and I thought it a favored time.

31st.—The Meeting for Discipline was opened ; and though very small, a number of honestly concerned Friends were in attendance.

Fifth-day, 3d of Eleventh Month, another public meeting was held ; which through divine mercy was a season to be remembered. Truth reigned over all ; and the meeting closed that evening.

The following is an extract of a letter to his wife written at this time :—

Baltimore, Eleventh Month 3d, 1842.

Dearly beloved Wife:—In near affection I tenderly salute thee, desiring thy strength and preservation, in and under the many trials, tribulations and cumbers, which no doubt surround thee. My mind is at times drawn out in a very tender manner towards thee and our children; believing that He who, I trust, has been the moving cause of this separation, is able to keep and preserve us in the hollow of his holy hand; so that it may redound to our advancement in the Christian's path, and be of those afflictions that may work for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." \* \* \*

On arriving in this city we met with a number of strangers from other Yearly Meetings. Elizabeth Evans, Hannah Rhoads, Ebenezer Roberts and Regina Shober, from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting; Moses H. Beede, from New England; and Edith Griffith, from Redstone quarter. It has been a time of much suffering on account of, what appears to me, a superficial ministry. The Select Yearly Meeting closed yesterday, in which relief was obtained in some close remarks respecting the ministry. Our dear friends E. Evans and H. Rhoads were acceptably engaged.

My feelings are often drawn towards you, my dear children, in the most tender manner, desiring that you may be so attentive to the voice of the good Shepherd, as to experience preservation from everything that might hurt or harm you. I want you all to be very tender of your dear mother; she is worthy of your highest esteem, as well as filial regard; because of her pious care over you, and her unwearied diligence in providing for your wants.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.



Sixth-day morning, took the cars for Philadelphia, leaving my companion to come with the carriage; arrived that evening and was kindly received by my dear friend Thomas Kite. Attended the Select Quarterly Meeting on Seventh-day, to satisfaction.

First-day, the 6th, at the North Meeting, which was an open time. In the afternoon, at Western, which was a dragging, laborious time.

7th.—Attended the Quarterly Meeting, in which the blessed Head of the church was near; and gave ability for that portion of service required; for which my soul was bowed in thankfulness for the favor.

8th.—Set off towards New York, and lodged at the house of our dear friend Christopher Healy. He had just returned from a tour among the Indians of Wisconsin Territory, and the meetings of Indiana Yearly Meeting; and appeared to be enjoying the reward therefor.

10th.—Reached New York, and were kindly received by dear John Wood and family.

Here he again writes to his wife, of which the following is an extract :—

New York, Eleventh Month 11th, 1842.

My dear Wife :—From Baltimore, where I last wrote, I took passage in the cars for Philadelphia, and arrived the same evening. \* \* \* Attended the Quarterly Meeting there on the 7th, which was the largest meeting of the kind I ever attended. Our blessed and holy Head was pleased to give us a fresh token for good, that might be seen even by those who are seeking an easier way to the Kingdom than by the way of the cross. I visited several Friends in the city—William Evans, Joseph Snowden, Elizabeth Pitfield, Samuel Bettle, and some

others. I lodged with Christopher Healy on my way to this place, which was mutually comforting to us. I could in measure rejoice with him who had been favored to perform the allotted portion of service, and was then enjoying the sweet reward of peace, while I was still under the weight and awfulness of extended labor in a foreign and northern clime. May the everlasting arm be my guard and guide through all the steps that are yet to be taken, for truly my soul knoweth that it is only through the all-sustaining help of Him, who, when He "putteth forth his own sheep and goeth before them," that any can be kept in the newness of the spirit, and enabled to labor as ambassadors for the King of Peace in such a way as may redound to the honor of the great Name, to the peace and quiet settlement of the church, and to the welfare of their own souls. I have felt so well satisfied that I am in my proper place in the present engagement, that I cannot wish myself in any other situation. \* \* \* We have had the company of Prince Gardner, from Nantucket, which was acceptable. It is said that Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting has laid down South Kingston Monthly Meeting—a very serious state of affairs.

I often feel the awfulness of the embassy in which I am engaged, and that it is only under the all-sustaining hand of Israel's God that I can move forward from day to day in the great work, at a time when that spirit which would lead into the mixture, and out of that straight and narrow way which the feet of our forefathers, and the faithful from that day to this, have happily been turned into, is so busily at work, to sap, if it were possible, the very foundation of Quakerism; and has, indeed, been too successful in many instances. O, may the Lord continue to

lead his poor dependent children; and show himself to be an hiding-place unto them in all their trials and deep baptisms, which in his own pure and perfect wisdom is seen to be necessary for the work whereunto they are called.

I remain thy affectionate husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Attended meetings in the city on First-day, the 13th, to satisfaction, particularly the latter; wherein Divine strength was afforded to lay judgment to the line upon a spirit that is deceptively delusive,—that is weary of the plainness and simplicity of our high and holy profession, and would fain lead into the mixture, to sap the very foundation of Quakerism. I was led to show them that Truth is the same now that it was in the primitive days; hence, the way of the daily cross is the path for us to walk in,—the very same path that our dear forefathers trod. My mind has experienced deep exercise on account thereof for many months; and I have had to mourn because of its baneful effects, as it alienates the minds of Friends from each other, and is calculated to lead back again into the world's ways, worship and ministry. May our eternal and holy Head, by his everlasting power, keep and preserve his heritage from this deception, and establish, strengthen and settle his poor, tribulated Church, upon “that Rock, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.”

Left New York on Second-day, the 14th, in a steam-boat, and arrived at Cornwall on the 15th, and had a meeting there, to satisfaction.

16th.—At Clove; which was an open, good meeting. Also had a meeting at Blooming-Grove, where religion appeared to be at a very low ebb.

18th.—Had a meeting at the Valley, to satisfaction; and one at Marlborough the next day.

First-day, 20th.—At Plattekill, where my gracious Master was near by his Divine power; giving ability to show the importance of an acquaintance with God; which is to be realized only by attending to the Divine gift in the heart. The meeting ended in thanksgiving and praise unto Him whose is the power, as well as the work. Truth reigned over all.

21st.—At Platz; which was a very suffering time.

22d.—At Plains Monthly Meeting; Divine strength was afforded to labor honestly for the welfare of the Church. The language of encouragement ran freely to some who were concerned to build upon that immovable "Rock of Ages," as well as close labor bestowed on the careless professors. Our religious Society appears to be in a very low state.

Attended Marlborough Monthly Meeting, held at Plattekill. A season of Divine favor. May the Lord be praised, for his works alone can praise Him.

24th.—Had a meeting at Poughkeepsie, to good satisfaction.

25th.—At Beakman; which, through Divine mercy, was a season to be remembered. An open door was set before me, and the "unsearchable riches of Christ" was freely declared, I trust, in the "demonstration of the Spirit, and of power." Lodged at James Congden's, and had a meeting at his house, to a good degree of satisfaction.

First-day, 27th.—At Nine Partners Had a meeting with the pupils in the school. My Divine Master gave strength to discharge the portion of service required; though sadness covered my mind in viewing the great de-

partures from our peculiar testimonies. I am renewedly confirmed in the belief, that it is only as Yearly Meeting Boarding Schools are conducted under religious feeling and weight, that the object can be reached; for indeed, it appears to me, that if those who have the immediate oversight thereof, are not consistent members and testimony-bearers; such schools, instead of being as our holy Head would have them to be, prove merely a nursery of pride and vanity, and our dear youth will soar above the Divine gift, take wings, and leave the Society. May the Lord in his mercy enable the Church to keep to his own divine power, that its efforts in this important matter may be rendered subservient to the advancement of the cause which is dignified with immortality, and crowned with eternal life.

28th,—At Creek Meeting, which was an open time; and at Stanford in the afternoon, to satisfaction. Lodged at the house of Sarah C. Hull, widow of our late friend and fellow-laborer in the Gospel, Henry Hull. We proceeded forward, and attended meetings at North-East, Little Nine Partners, and Hudson; then passed on to Saratoga.

The following is an extract of a letter to his wife, written at this time.

Near the city of Hudson, Eleventh Month 30th, 1842.

My dear Wife:— \* \* \* We have been favored to get along as well as we could expect, and can “set up our Ebenezer” and say, “hitherto the Lord hath helped us.” He hath afforded such clear evidences of his gracious regard, that there is not a doubt left of our being in our right places; though many baptisms and trials are our portion. The precious seed of life is oppressed and borne

down in many places ; and sometimes, where they show us all the kindness that is necessary, our Divine Master is very unkindly treated, and even kept out, until his "head is filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night ;" which makes us feel very sad. Oh, I have desired that I might be willing to suffer with Him ! Suffering is in large measure dealt out to the faithful members of our religious Society. I have never had my mind so clothed with mourning on account thereof, as of recent time. A spirit is in the camp which leads into the mixture, compromising our peculiar testimonies, and thus carrying back into that which our dear forefathers were gathered out of. Yet it is a comfort to find a remnant in most places, who, I trust, will not be driven from the good old way, and who are "grieved for the afflictions of Joseph," spiritually. My spirit is in deep sympathy with these, not doubting that the Lord's faithful children will be kept in the "hollow of his hand," and enabled to support the various testimonies of Truth to their own peace, and to the praise of his great name.

I keep the run of all our meetings at home, and my spirit often visits you in them. I believe that all the Divine promises are "yea, and amen, forever ;" and, therefore, our holy Head will be in the midst of those who are gathered in his name, though but few in number. It is snowing very fast, and the weather having been winter-like for some days, I expect we will leave our carriage here and take a sleigh.

As ever, thy affectionate husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

First-day, 4th of Twelfth Month.—Attended a meeting at Half-Moon, to satisfaction ; and rode that evening to



Shaticoke ; a little meeting, held in David Devol's house. My gracious Master gave strength to open to the people the "unsearchable riches of Christ." The power of the Lord was present to heal the diseases of all who in faith were concerned to submit themselves thereto ; and the meeting would have ended well had it not been for some "dead flies" cast in by a member of the meeting, which "caused the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a savor," not so pleasant as before.

Fourth-day, 7th, we proceeded to East Hoosack, in the State of Massachusetts, and attended meeting there ; found the state of religion lamentably low. O, how the poor traveller has to mourn when his divine Master is in suffering ! I was favored, however, to perform the allotted portion of service. Proceeded that evening towards Granville, where we arrived on Fifth-day evening, and had a meeting there on Sixth-day, in which Truth reigned over all. May the praise be ascribed unto Him from whom all strength cometh, and who is worthy of all praise forever.

First-day, 11th, attended a meeting at Lincoln ; a time of close labor, but felt sweet peace. Dined at Benjamin Taber's, and had a meeting at the Creek in the evening ; which was an open time in close labor to some lukewarm professors. The way of life was spoken of, I trust, in the "demonstration of the spirit and of power ;" and the day closed peacefully.

12th.—At Starksborough ; a time of suffering ; very little relief was obtained.

13th.—At Monkton and Ferrisburgh, to satisfaction ; particularly the latter.

14th.—Rode through a very severe snow storm to Montpelier, and had a meeting there ; and the next

morning set out for Farnham, Lower Canada. We reached Barton in the evening, and lodged at the house of James May; a member of our Society, who, together with his family, sit down in their house on First-days; and sometimes others come and sit with them. We had a meeting in the town to satisfaction, and set out again in the afternoon, expecting to reach Farnham Monthly Meeting; but a heavy snow storm coming on, rendered it very difficult travelling, the snow being so much drifted that it was almost impossible to get through; and very cold. It caused me to reflect upon the many sufferings and hardships which our dear forefathers endured in the early settlement of America. The accommodations, however, are very different now; though far inferior in this country to that of our own. We travelled very hard all day and only made about fifteen miles; were favored to reach a poor inn in the evening, for which I felt thankful.

On Third-day, the 20th, we proceeded on through the deep snow; it being from four to five feet deep in many of the lanes. Travelled about twenty miles and reached the settlement of Friends in Lower Canada, where we were very cordially received by them.

21st.—Had a meeting at Farnham, which was largely attended by Friends and others, and it was a season to be remembered. Truth reigned over all, under the authority of which strength was given to declare the “unsearchable riches of Christ.” The meeting closed with humble supplication and thanksgiving unto God for his many mercies. Left in sweet peace and great tenderness towards Friends in this remote part of the heritage. Set out in the afternoon for Peru, and arrived on Sixth-day evening, the 23d, and stopped at Wm. Kee’s.

First-day, 25th.—At Peru in the forenoon (in Friends’

meeting-house), wherein Divine strength was given to declare the way of life and salvation. In the evening, had a meeting in the village of Peru, and humbly hope the cause was not injured thereby.

Third-day morning, 27th.—Set out for Queensbury, and arrived on Fourth-day evening, and attended Monthly Meeting there on Fifth-day. The reward of peace was vouchsafed for honest labor to some lukewarm professors. Had an evening meeting on the banks of North River, where a few families of Friends reside; to which many not of our Society came. The “unsearchable riches of Christ,” I trust, was declared, in some degree of the “demonstration of the Spirit.”

30th—At Greenfield, which was a good meeting; and at Galloway in the evening; a time of instruction to many. Lodged at Caleb Parmer’s, expecting to go directly on to Le Ray Quarterly Meeting; but owing to a heavy fall of snow during the night, we were detained several days, which was a renewed call on my little stock of patience, having felt great anxiety on account of my dear family for some weeks, and expecting to get letters from them, either at Le Ray or Lowville.

Here he wrote to his wife, the following being an extract:—

Twelfth Month 31st, 1842.

My dearly beloved Wife:—Being detained from pursuing our journey, in consequence of a heavy snow-storm, I think it will be best for me to write, though I have deferred it for some time, hoping soon to reach Lowville, where I might receive a letter from thee; as I have had no account since leaving John Wood’s, nearly eight weeks ago. It has been a great trial of my faith and patience,

and the more so, because some of our dear children were complaining at that time. \* \* \* We have been favored to get along without any accident thus far, for which I feel thankful to the great Preserver of men. We have been very industriously engaged in the work before us, having visited the meetings of Saratoga and Ferrisburgh since I last wrote thee; the meetings of the latter are very widely scattered, which occasioned much travelling; but we were favored to get along safely, and we felt glad in having visited this remote settlement; indeed, I was richly paid for all the fatigue and exercise I had to undergo. May the great name of our God be worshipped and adored forever. My soul, though unworthy of the least of his mercies, can say, "Hitherto He hath helped us;" though the trials which have been meted out, perhaps, have never been more severe than during the present journey. It does me good to remember that I have thy prayers, as well as the prayers of many other dear friends and connexions. Oh, I sometimes look over the meetings in our quarter, and although I know that weakness too much prevails there, yet if I have been favored to be dipped into a sense of the state of Society in this land, it is far below it. A spirit which is weary of the plainness and simplicity of the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus, is leading into the world, its riches, its fashions and customs, together with its flatteries, which eats up every green thing where it goes, and does, indeed, seem like spreading devastation in this land; and yet, there is a remnant, as the "two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough," up and down in the different meetings, unto whom we have felt nearly united in the covenant of life, and who are, I trust, as "the dew in the midst of" many people. But, oh, how sad we many times feel, in passing along from place

to place; so little of that living, upright zeal, which so remarkably characterized our dear forefathers, and which is to be found (blessed be the name of Israel's Shepherd,) in many parts of his heritage. \* \* \* In tender love, I remain,

Thy affectionate husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

First-day, First Month 1st, 1843.—Had a meeting at Providence, and found relief in some close service. My mind has often been clothed with mourning on account of the low state of the Church, which induces the mournful language: "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"

Set out on the morning of the 2nd towards Lowville, a distance of one hundred miles; and reached the neighborhood of Western the next evening. Had meetings at Western, and Lee, on the 5th to good satisfaction. Lodged at the house of John Powel in company with Lachens Hill of whom it could be said as of Nathaniel of old, "Behold an Isrelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." Had a refreshing opportunity in the morning which I believe, will long be remembered. May the Lord's great name be praised, who is worthy forever, and the poor creature be kept where it ought to be—in the very dust.

6th.—We reached Lowville, where I received a letter from my dear wife, giving the sorrowful intelligence of the decease of our beloved daughter, Lydia; which was indeed a proving dispensation, and deeply affected me: though, I trust, I was preserved from giving way too much; yet it was hard to suppress the falling tear. And I am inclined to think it may be admissible to give vent to

affectionate feelings in this way to a limited extent; for "Jesus wept" at the grave of Lazarus. \* \* \* And, to the praise of the good Shepherd be it spoken, His sustaining arm bore up my head above the waves, and enabled me, in humble acquiescence with His divine will to say with Job; "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

We attended meetings at Le Ray and Indian River, to satisfaction.

Relative to the close trial above alluded to he thus writes to his family:—

Lowville, First Month 7th, 1843.

My dear Wife and Children:—We are now at Thomas Townsend's; arrived here last evening, where I soon became acquainted with the mournful tidings of the 12th of last month, the removal of our dear Lydia from time to eternity. The keenness of the stroke you can better understand than I can describe; and yet, I trust, that eternal arm which has been my help in many times of trial, has been, and will continue to be near, and hold up my head above the waves.

We left Le Ray yesterday morning, and while riding to this place, it ran through my mind; "One of our daughters is gone." My mind was directly turned to our parting opportunity; in which, as well as at other times, I committed you all, as also my own soul into the hands of that God who doeth all things after the counsels of his own will; which had a tendency to quiet my mind, still hoping it might not be so, until I got hold of the letter.

And now my dear, notwithstanding this very severe dispensation which has been meted out to us, I am fully satisfied that this separation from thee has been in the



ordering of the Head of the church : and as respects the dear sufferer, who has passed away, I have no doubt all was done that could have been done had I been present with you. I therefore desire thy encouragement and strength, as thou, with myself hast many times known the everlasting arms to be underneath to bear up and carry us through that which would have appeared impossible to human understanding. O, He is worthy of all praise forever, and ever, as well as our entire obedience!

I feel for our dear children, knowing the severe stroke is very keenly felt by them. O, I want you to love Him who hath dealt thus with us in his wisdom! though it is in causing us to drink the waters of "Marah" and affliction; for He is very gracious unto His children in every part of his heritage, and will keep them, and as they love Him more and more, they will become stronger and stronger, living to his praise, who is worthy of all that can be ascribed unto Him.

And now, my dear, I must soon close this little paper messenger; and as respects this way of communication, stop the current of affectionate regard which runs as a lively stream through my heart unto thee, and our dear children; and remain thy affectionate husband and companion in tribulation, and, I trust, in the faith and patience of the Gospel,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Sixth-day morning, the 13th, set out for Upper-Canada, and crossed over the great river St. Lawrence to the house of Isaac Booth. I felt thankful to the great Preserver of men for his many favors and deliverences. Had a meeting in a school-house in the vicinity on Seventh-day; and then rode to Harvey Derbyshire's.

First-day, 15th, at Leeds meeting, which was an open good time in declaring the "unsearchable riches of Christ."

16th.—Set out for Leonark, a distance of near sixty miles, a small number of members being there, but found to my sorrow that they were far short of being thorough Friends. Had a meeting with them to satisfaction, in which I felt it my duty to lay the matter close home to them. Returned to Leeds meeting on Fifth-day, wherein I felt it my duty to deal plainly. Had a meeting south of Leeds, and one northeast; the latter was a very open good meeting among a company of serious, and some seeking people.

Sixth-day morning set out for Kingston; and after traveling ten or twelve miles on the mud in the sleigh, arrived late in the evening.

First-day, 22nd. At Kingston meeting: close service went forth to some lukewarm professors, and felt peace. From thence went to Camden, a small meeting held on First-days. Had a meeting on Fourth-day morning; and one in the evening in a school-house, about fifteen miles towards Adolphustown. The former, particularly, was an open time. Thence, to Adolphustown meeting, to satisfaction.

Crossed the Bay of Quinte on the ice, and were favored to get safely over, for which I felt thankful. May I never forget all, nor any of His benefits. Went to William Roerk's, where I received several letters, one of which was from my dear wife and children. which was a great satisfaction to me. May the Lord be pleased to keep and sustain them by his eternal power, and enable them to bear the sore bereavement that has been permitted to attend, with resignation and fortitude.

Sixth-day, at the Boarding School; had a religious

opportunity with the pupils; felt very sorrowful on account of the situation of the school, it having been opened for those who are not members of our religious society, and thereby is a very crippled concern.

First-day, 29th, at West Lake in the forenoon, and in the evening had a meeting in the town of Pictou. The former was a solid good meeting, and the power of Truth was felt to prevail. The latter was very large; supposed to be more than a thousand present. The people appeared attentive, and I was led to open to them the doctrines of the gospel, I trust, in the "demonstration of the spirit and of power."

30th.—At Helier, to satisfaction; and on Third-day, the 31st, the Select Half Year's meeting was held, which was a time of close searching labor; and towards the close, Truth reigned over all. May praise be ascribed unto Him, who is "Head over all things to his church."

From this place he again wrote to his family, the following being an extract thereof:—

West Lake, Upper Canada, First Month 31st, 1843.

My dear Wife and Children:—I again salute you in the tenderest feelings that can flow from the heart of an affectionate husband and father. Very deeply do I feel for, and sympathize with you in the trials which have been meted out by Him "who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds his chariots; and who walketh upon the wings of the wind," unseen by mortal eye; and no doubt in the counsels of that wisdom which is perfect, it becomes us to say, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good." I hope I have not given way improperly to my tender affectionate feelings towards you; for although I often give vent to the emotions of my heart, particularly when alone, I do not repine, nor doubt that

I am in my proper place. My gracious Master has been with me, and supported me beyond my expectations: may his great name be praised and magnified forever

It has been a strength to me in the many baptisms that have attended in this arduous engagement, to believe that I have the prayers of many, very many dear friends both at home and in other places, that I may be preserved, and strengthened to fill up the measure of allotted service, to the honor of the great Head of the church, and to the peace of my own mind. And to the praise of Israel's Shepherd be it spoken, He hath not failed to be near in "heights and in depths," and hath equipped for every service, however close and trying, or humiliating to the creature. Indeed, I never saw more clearly the wonder-working-power of eternal Jehovah, in leading his servants again and again into deep baptisms, than of recent time. May stones of memorial be taken from the bottom of "Jordan and pitched in Gilgal," to bear testimony to the goodness of the Lord to his people. \* \* \*

I desire to be preserved in patience until the time comes when a release may be sounded from further service in a foreign land. It is scarcely worth while to say, then gladly shall I return to you, if so permitted, which I trust, will be the case in the Lord's time. \* \* \* May the Lord bless you, and watch over you by day and by night, together with my own soul, and preserve us in his "secret pavilion," where no "evil can befall, nor any plague come nigh." \* \* \* Thy affectionate husband.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Fourth-day, Second Month, 1st.—The meeting for discipline commenced. Heavenly help was near, and strengthened for the service required. Fifth-day, a public

meeting was held, which was largely attended by Friends and others; and I trust, to many, it was an instructive opportunity. In the afternoon the meeting for discipline closed. My mind felt sad because of the low, mixed state of the church. Left the meeting with the reward of peace, in delivering what appeared to be the counsel of my divine Master.

Sixth-day, had a meeting in the evening at the house of P. L., in the town of Sidney; and were at Cold Creek meeting on Seventh-day; in which the glad tidings of the gospel were proclaimed in the demonstration of the Spirit. May the name of our God be exalted over all.

First-day, 5th, at Haldemand—a poor little meeting: obtained relief in some close labor to the lukewarm.

Second-day, rode fifty miles to Pickering; a very extremely cold day.

Third-day, at Pickering meeting, which was a favored time. Set out on Fourth-day for Uxbridge, and travelled about eleven miles, where we found the snow so drifted that we could not go forward: had to return, and proceeded to Yonge street, and were at a meeting there, where the life of religion appeared to be at a low ebb.

In the evening, at White Church; and the next day at Tecumseh, to satisfaction; on our way to Pelham, we attended a meeting near Stony Creek on First-day evening, appointed by our friend Mead Atwater, for the colored people. Attended the Select meeting at Pelham on Third-day; the meeting for discipline on Fourth-day; and the public meeting on Fifth-day; through all of which the Lord helped us to discharge the portion of service required. May his great name be magnified over all.

Set out on Sixth-day morning, the 17th, and crossed the Niagara river just below the Falls. We stopped

awhile to view the works of the great Creator, which all praise Him. And truly, on landing on the American shore I felt thankful to Him for his many deliverances and preservations, both by sea and land. O, may my soul forever praise Him, who is worthy to be worshipped, and adored by all his workmanship! and particularly, to be had in remembrance in the most awful humility and gratitude, by all those that are "about Him."

First-day, 19th, attended meeting at Lockport. The spring of gospel ministry was pretty freely opened in a tender manner to some who had left their first-love; commencing with the Scripture language; "I remember thee; the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown;" showing the need of remembering the days of our tenderness, wherein a willingness was experienced to follow the Lamb in the way of his holy leading, even in a wilderness state, or in a land that was not sown; and the necessity of looking unto, and following that which first awakened us. Counsel also flowed in a tender manner to some not in profession with us, diligently to take heed unto the Divine gift in the heart, whereby any may come to experience the goodness and mercy of the Lord, and be prepared for another and a better world.

20th.—At Somerset and Hartland. The life seemed to be low. Felt a good degree of peace for honest labor, being very close,—particularly in the former. My spirit mourned on account of the low state of the Church. "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people."

21st.—At Shelby and Elba, to satisfaction. Rode to Buffalo the next day, and had a meeting in the evening



with the few Friends there, and some friendly people who came in. I was led to show them the necessity of an upright walk before the Lord, whereby they might adorn our high and holy profession.

Rode on Fifth-day morning, the 23d, about twenty-five miles, to Collins Monthly Meeting, in which the life was very low. Obtained peace by being faithful in the allotted portion of service. In the Meeting for Discipline, the very exciting subject of abolition of slavery was taken up, and it appeared evident to me that some of them were too much warmed with a forward zeal, even in a good cause. I felt it my duty to give them a hint of it, by remarking to them, that I had remembered the circumstance of Peter's wife's mother being taken with a great fever; and when our blessed Lord laid his cooling hand upon her, immediately the fever left her, and she arose and ministered unto them. Oh, how sorrowful it is that Friends suffer themselves to be carried away from the ancient ground, which our religious Society has acted upon from generation to generation, even a waiting for the direction of our holy Head, and then to move as He may open the way.

Sixth-day, at Clear Creek and Hamburg. The former was largely attended by Friends, and others, and was a very open time.

First-day, 26th, at Orangeville; a poor little meeting.

28th.—At Wheatland; which was an open, good meeting. Thence to Farmington, and attended that meeting the next day; but was entirely closed. It seemed to me that an example of silence was my service among them. My mind was clothed with mourning; many Friends having become excited on the subject of abolition, temperance, &c., and thus running in the activity of the crea-

ture, into the mixture with other people, so that genuine Quakerism seems likely to be eaten up. I feel these to be very important subjects, which we, as a religious Society, have always held very dear; but it is highly important that in promoting them, we should move on in a collective capacity, as we have learned of our Divine Master. It is lamentably the case, that where there has been a mixing with other people, the language respecting Ephraim of old is applicable: "Ephraim hath mixed himself among the people; strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not."

Fifth-day, Third Month 2d.—Attended a meeting in the evening at M——, where Divine life was at a low ebb; and having a cold, we rested the next day, and went thence to Scipio.

4th.—Were at North-street and Scipio; both favored meetings, particularly the latter, which was a refreshing season.

The following is an extract of a letter to A. B., written at this time:—

Third Month 6th, 1843.

My dear Friend, A. B.:—Having for some time felt my mind drawn towards thee in, I trust, a portion of that gospel fellowship which unites the members of that body of which Christ Jesus is the Head, I salute thee, and may say, through the mercy of the good Shepherd, we have been favored to get forward as well as we have had reason to expect. Many, indeed, are the baptisms which have been our portion, of different kinds; some of which, I have no doubt, have been administered for the purpose of keeping the poor vessel in its proper place and condition. May I learn more and more in the school of Christ, being found

in that situation wherein the heavenly anthem : " Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done," may be adopted. To be baptized for the dead seems to be a very prominent part of the suffering meted out to us. Oh, my life has been brought very low with the suffering seed in our poor "stripped and peeled" Society ; and, perhaps, never more so than within a few weeks past. There is at work in various places an over-active spirit, in Abolitionism, Temperanceism, and Gurneyism, which, like the "locust," the "cankerworm" and "caterpillar," are ready to eat up every green thing. I trust there are many sound Friends hereaway ; and yet, if I do justice to my feelings, I must say, that the life of religion is very low in many places. \* \* \* This over-active, restless spirit that is unwilling to come under the circumscribing limitations of the cross of Christ, and which strikes at the very life of Quakerism, is much to be dreaded in these days. Nevertheless, in the midst of many discouraging things, I trust it may be said, there is a remnant in most places who are of the salt of the earth,—who are desiring to be found faithful, to whom we have felt nearly united in the covenant of life. May they hold on their way, and become stronger and stronger. \* \* \* I remain, in the fellowship of the Gospel,

Thy friend,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

5th.—Had a very small meeting at Skeneateles ; the life of religion lamentably low. Thence to De Ruyter, where Truth's testimony was held forth in some degree of gospel authority.

Here he again writes to his wife, of which the following is an extract :—

De Ruyter, Third Month 8th, 1843.

My dearly beloved Wife:—I again salute thee, together with our dear children, and may say, through Divine mercy we have been favored to get along as well as could be expected. \* \* \* I have no doubt I have thy prayers, as well as the prayers of many other dear friends, both at home and abroad, which has been a strength to me under the many trials which I have had to pass through in going from place to place, many times, as it were, with my hands upon my loins, and weeping, too, for the “slain of the daughter of my people.” Not slain in the Lord’s battles, but on the enemy’s ground. \* \* \* Yet, it has often been a comfort to believe that the “foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: the Lord knoweth them that are his;” and that his own are known by Him, and sustained by Him, however they may have to pass through evil report for their faithfulness to our holy Head. Oh, how great is his goodness towards them that fear Him! He will hide them secretly in his presence from the pride of man, and will keep them in his “pavilion from the strife of tongues.” To the praise and the glory of our eternal Helper be it spoken, He has not failed to be near, and by his arm underneath, to bear up. May my soul forever commemorate his goodness, and the remainder of my life serve Him with a willing mind.

\* \* \* We are still in the old sleigh, and think likely we shall get it back to Hudson, as there is plenty of snow yet. We have travelled about twenty-two hundred miles in it. I have often thought of you during this long, cold winter; how you are getting along in different respects; but have to leave you in the hands of our great Creator. I remain, as ever,

Thy loving husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

We next went into the limits of Butternuts Quarter, taking Smyrna, Madison, Brookfield and Burlington, to satisfaction.

First-day, 12th, at Butternuts, which was a large meeting; many not of our Society being there. Next, at Otego and Lawrens; both to the relief of my own mind; but not feeling easy, we returned to Butternuts, and attended their meeting on Fourth-day. Found relief by faithfulness in delivering what seemed to be the allotted portion of service. My spirit has often been clothed with mourning, on account of a disposition that seems to prevail, which would compromise the peculiar testimonies for which our forefathers so deeply suffered.

On Fifth-day, 16th, rode to Blenheim, and were detained there until First-day, by deep snow-drifts. Sat down, at 11 o'clock, with the few Friends there, and some of the neighbors, which was a solid, edifying season. \* \* Set out First-day afternoon towards the city of Hudson, and arrived at the house of our kind friends, Samuel and Ann Marriott, where we started from in the sleigh, the last of Eleventh Month. We were rejoiced to get there. Attended Hudson Monthly Meeting; counsel flowed freely to the exercised Christian travellers; while close labor was meted out to some careless, unconcerned professors. Left in peace.

Fourth-day, 22d, attended Coeymans Monthly Meeting; an open time in testimony, beginning with the words: "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," demanding deep and awful attention, that we might come up faithfully as individual members of the Church; showing, that if ever the Church does arise and shake herself from the dust of the

earth, and put on her beautiful garments, individual faithfulness and purity must be witnessed.

Returned to Samuel Marriott's through a snow-storm.

Here he again writes to his family, as follows:—

Near Hudson, State of New York,  
Third Month 24th, 1843.

Dearly beloved Wife and Children:—In dear and tender love do I again salute you, being prevented from travelling by a heavy snow-storm, which is a fresh trial of patience. The snow is perhaps three feet deep where it is not drifted, and from ten to fifteen where it is blown into lanes and roads. It has been exceeding difficult travelling; indeed, it has been impossible in many places, until the roads were opened with shovels. I feel very tenderly for you, and have been desirous to improve the time. I much desire to be preserved in the patience until the Lord's time, when a release may be granted, and liberty given to return to you, which, I believe, will be ere long.

\* \* \* Many baptisms have been permitted to attend during the present arduous engagement; yet, I may say, I have never felt a greater evidence in my feeble stepping along, that I have been, and am at this time, in my proper place; although sensible that I am an unprofitable servant, having done, in this very humiliating service, that only which it was my duty to do. And as respects the Society for which we so deeply feel, thou knows it is not a time of much sending of presents, one to another, under a sense of the abounding of that life which so eminently marked earlier days; indeed, the mind is often clothed with mourning, because of the "slain of the daughter of my people,"—slain, not in the Lord's battles, but on the enemy's ground—a delusively deceptive, compromis-



ing spirit, which raises itself above the cross of Christ, and which strikes at the life of Quakerism. This is so prevalent, that the poor pilgrim is ready to say with one formerly : " Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." There is, however, (blessed be the name of Israel's God), a remnant, unto whom I feel nearly united in the covenant of life, and with whom we have been refreshed, even as of a brook by the way. \* \* \* I have received no letter from thee since being at Pictou, Upper Canada, the last of First Month. Give my kind and affectionate remembrance to all our relatives and friends in thy freedom. I often remember you in all our meetings at home, believing that some of you feel deeply for the "ark" of the "testimony," and many times feel the solemn responsibility which rests upon you. May the "eternal God be your refuge; and underneath the everlasting arms," to support and strengthen you in "every good word and work." E. and M. B. are of the number alluded to, and are sharers of my lively interest. My love to them in the fellowship of the gospel. I must draw to a close, and remain, as ever, in that which time, nor distance, can in any degree diminish, thy loving husband and companion in the tribulations of the gospel,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

We were detained by the deep snow until First-day, the 26th, when we rode to Little Nine Partners, to a meeting, at 2 o'clock; a poor little meeting. An example of silence appeared to be my place. After attending a meeting on Fourth-day, to satisfaction, we proceeded on our way towards New York; and on arriving, attended meet-

ings in the city, on First-day, the 2d of Fourth Month, under awful feelings of the prevalence of a spirit that is lurking in secret places.

Thus closes the account of this visit, except what is contained in the following extract of a letter, written after arriving at the city of Philadelphia:—

Philadelphia, Fourth Month 8th, 1843.

My dearly beloved Wife:—Being now at the house of Thomas Kite, I take my pen in hand again to address thee. \* \* \* Through Divine mercy we have been favored to get along thus far, to the relief and peace of our minds. After arriving at New York, we attended both meetings in the city on First-day, the 2d. In the forenoon my Divine Master called for dedication; and by his all-sustaining hand of power, enabled me to declare “the unsearchable riches of Christ” to a large meeting of Friends, and others, to my own satisfaction; though mourning and lamentation was the clothing as respects many of the members of our highly professing religious Society; in which sense it might be said, that “bonds and afflictions abide.” In the afternoon, humble petitions were put up for our poor, stripped and peeled Society, that like the vine that was brought out of Egypt, spiritually, had been watered by the heavenly rain and celestial dew, from season to season, yet the “boar of the wood is wasting it, and the wild beast of the field is devouring it.” Every opposing spirit was kept under, and the Lord magnified over all. May my soul forever bless and praise his holy name while I have a being. Dear John Wood said in the evening: “We can say, in the language of David, ‘This is a day which the Lord hath made; we will be glad, and rejoice in it.’” I feel more and more my weakness and un-

worthiness, and that I am an unprofitable servant indeed; it is through holy help alone that I am enabled to speak well of his name; for truly, what I am, I am by his grace. May this covering of humility and nothingness be put on and worn to the end, is the desire of my heart.

Attended their Meeting for Sufferings on Second-day, which was a very trying time. An epistle having been received from the Meeting for Sufferings of Indiana, setting forth the cause of the recent separation from our religious Society in that country;\* which was read, and after a long discussion was not noticed on the minutes of the meeting. A very low state of things certainly does exist, if I have been dipped into a sense of the condition of the church in that part of the heritage. I felt on leaving the city, a peaceful release from further service there; and may inform thee, that, from my present feeling, I think we may be at liberty to set out for home soon after the close of Yearly Meeting here. On arriving in this city, I went directly to the house of Wm. and E. Evans; as he had been at our house, and was no doubt a comforter of those mourners for whom my tenderest sympathies flow. Night before last we were at Christopher Healy's, after attending his Monthly Meeting at the Falls; wherein he opened a prospect of religious service in New Jersey, principally among those not of our society.

I remain as ever, thy loving husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

\* On the subject of abolition of slavery.

## CHAPTER VII.

## ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO SALEM AND SPRINGFIELD QUARTERLY MEETINGS, AND THEIR BRANCHES.

HAVING felt my mind drawn in the love of the gospel to visit the meetings constituting Salem and Springfield Quarters; and having obtained the necessary certificate for that purpose, I set out on the 20th of First Month, 1844; my dear friend, Edmund Baily, bearing me company.

First-day, 21st.—Attended the meeting at the Boarding School at Mount Pleasant, to satisfaction. The language of encouragement flowed freely to the dear children, with desires for their growth and settlement in the Truth; that they might on their return to their own homes, and neighborhoods, give evidence of the preparing hand of the great Potter. Rode to Salineville the next day, and on Third-day, had a meeting there, to satisfaction.

On Fourth-day morning rode to Salem and attended the Monthly Meeting there, in which I was led to set forth the connection of the different members of the body; rising with the language, "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; and if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." It was a solid good meeting, and much to the relief and peace of my mind.

Fifth-day, attended Monthly Meeting at New Garden, to satisfaction.

Sixth-day, attended Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting, held at Augusta; a time of close labor. After meeting rode to Springfield, and attended Monthly Meeting there the next day; which was crowned by the life-giving pres-

ence of Him who is the Head of his own church. I was led into deep travail for the members of the church of Christ; standing up with the language, "The spirit and the bride say come; and let him that heareth say come; and let him that is athirst come and partake of the water of life freely." Left peacefully.

First-day, 28th.—At Goshen, which was a highly favored meeting; strength being given to labor for the restoration of the captive sons and daughters of Zion: reviving the language, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion; we hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof; for there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying: sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

The baptizing power of Truth prevailed over us. May the Lord be magnified over all.

Second-day, attended the Select Preparative Meeting at Marlborough—a very low time. Attended Monthly Meeting there on Third-day, which was a time to be remembered. My gracious Master enabling in a searching manner, to plead with the carnal professors; reviving the language, "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted because they are not." A lively emblem of the condition of the church, who is weeping because of many of her children who are in a carnally minded state, and therefore, as to the divine life "are not;" for, as saith the Apostle, "To be carnally minded is death; but, to be spiritually minded, is life and peace." Through faithfulness in extensive and searching labor, the reward of peace was mercifully vouchsafed.

Fourth-day, rode to Kendal. Dined at the house of Robert and Hannah Ghoskin, who are colored people; the latter a member of our Society; for whom I felt deeply, she having to go eight miles to meeting. Lodged at Richard Williams', and had a meeting there the next day, which was a low time; rode back to Marlborough the same evening, and had a meeting at Lexington on Sixth-day. The house was crowded, a considerable number having to stand the whole time. The baptizing power of Truth was felt eminently to spread over us; and strength was furnished to declare the "unsearchable riches of Christ" to them, many of whom were not members of our Society. May the praise be ascribed unto Him who "giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."

First-day, 4th of Second Month.—At meeting at Salem; which was a time of divine favor; feeling it my duty to stand up with the words, "Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering"—the language of the son to the venerable patriarch--his father; who replied; "God will provide himself a lamb." The language of encouragement flowed freely to some, who, in the faith of Abraham had made covenant with the Lord by some sacrifice; showing that their safety depended upon their faithfully following their divine Master in the future leadings of his Holy Spirit; though the sacrifices required might be such as nature would shrink from, as in the case of Abraham: believing, that in their experience they would know that God would provide himself an offering. A solemn appeal was made to some who had been visited by the "day-spring from on high;" but for want of faithfully following the heavenly Leader, they had suffered loss; the



“little foxes” had come in and injured the “vine,” so that it became unfruitful. It was a solid good meeting.

At Middleton on Second-day; which was through adorable mercy, a refreshing season; and the doctrines of the gospel were opened, and flowed freely to a crowded meeting of Friends and others.

In the afternoon, at Elk-Run. I sat in great poverty; having invited the people to come together, most of whom were not members, I was brought very low: but He who is the “resurrection and the life,” in his own time arose and granted ability to declare the “unsearchable riches of Christ,” to the people.

Third-day at Carmel to satisfaction.

Fourth-day, attended the Select Preparative at Middleton, and on Fifth-day, the Monthly Meeting, in which our blessed and adorable Head was near, to the refreshing of the hearts of many. May his holy name be magnified over all. In the meeting for discipline, I was led to sound an alarm among them, on account of a spirit of strong delusion which is lurking around, and calculated to lead the unsettled mind from the Truth, and create a disrelish for the sublime and important subject of practical piety, even to the reproach and scandal of the Christian name: called by some French Philosophy or Mesmerism; in connection with Phrenology; on account of which I have mourned and been in heaviness. May the Lord open the eyes of the people to see the delusions of the enemy, that a standard may be lifted up against him.

Sixth-day, at the Select Quarter at Salem, to satisfaction; and attended the Quarterly Meeting on Seventh-day, which was a season of renewed favor; strength being given to divide the word to a very crowded meeting, in a close and searching manner, to the indifferent and superficial

professors; and to some who had suffered the “foxes”—the “little foxes,”—to injure the “vines,” whereby they had become unfruitful. The language of encouragement flowed freely to the poor in spirit; and the meeting was crowned with the spirit of prayer and supplication to the throne of grace. May praise and thanksgiving be ascribed unto Him whose loving kindness and tender compassion has been from of old, from everlasting.

First-day, the 11th.—At Springfield; in which I believed it my duty to set an example of silence. In the afternoon had a meeting for the youth, which was largely attended, and was a very solid and orderly meeting; and through the tender compassion of the Shepherd of the sheep, it was a good meeting. Truth reigned over all. The spring of the ministry ran freely to the different classes: may the opportunity be blessed to them.

Second day, attended the Select Quarter—a solid edifying season.

Third-day, at the meeting for discipline. The presence of our ever adorable Head was mercifully witnessed bringing into an holy solemnity. I felt the power of Truth gradually to arise in my heart, which centred me deeper and deeper in awful abasement of soul, until it appeared to be my duty to stand up with the words, “Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.” The members of the mystical body of Christ were called upon to dwell deep in the power of an endless life; the deep things of God call for deep indwelling—the state recommended by that faithful servant and elder, who was the first instrument in gathering us together in the beginning, where he says, “Let all your meetings be held in the power of God.” As the members of the body are gathered with one accord

into one place, waiting in their measures upon Christ Jesus, the "Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord hath pitched, and not man;" the state spoken of by St. John, the divine, comes to be witnessed, where he saw a "woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet; and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Clothed with the Son of righteousness, in the light of which shining brightness she is enabled to go forth in her transcendent beauty and glory, and the moon under her feet—everything changeable kept under her feet; and upon her head a crown of twelve stars—representatives of the twelve tribes of the Israel of God, scattered abroad. The word of exhortation flowed freely to the careless, superficial members, to gather to the divine gift in themselves that they might be "raised into newness of life;" being united with those who are travailing for the "welfare of Zion, and the enlargement of her borders," that the language might be proclaimed: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord hath risen upon thee." "Her light is come"—"clothed with the sun," and thus go forth under the authority of Him whose right it is to be "Head over all things to his own church."

Thus the account of this visit closes.

## CHAPTER VIII.

ACCOUNT OF A VISIT WITHIN THE LIMITS OF PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING, IN 1844; WHICH CONCERN EXTENDED TO NEW ENGLAND; FOR WHICH SERVICE HE WAS LIBERATED BY HIS FRIENDS AT HOME; BUT OWING TO THE WELL-KNOWN DIFFERENCE IN OUR SOCIETY ON POINTS OF DOCTRINE, WHICH THEN EXISTED THERE, THE PROSECUTION OF HIS CONCERN WAS OPPOSED; TO WHICH HE SUBMITTED, IN ACCORDANCE WITH DISCIPLINARY ORDER, AND LEFT HIS BURDEN WITH THEM.

THE first account we find of his engaging in this visit, is contained in the following extract of a letter, written to his wife, after his arrival at New York:—

New York, Sixth Month 12th, 1844.

My dearly beloved Wife:—I am now at the house of our dear friend, John Wood. I set off from Wheeling as was expected, on Seventh-day morning, the 1st of Sixth Month, and got to Westland in the afternoon. Went to see our afflicted friend, Mildred Ratcliff, who is very feeble, yet appears to be alive in the Truth. Attended meeting at Westland, on First-day; and set off on Third-day evening in the stage, and crossed the mountains to Cumberland, where we took the rail-cars for Baltimore, and arrived in the evening. Set off next morning for Philadelphia; got in about 3 o'clock, and was, as heretofore, kindly received. I soon went to see Joseph Snowden, the Friend I had looked towards to bear me company; but he being in poor health, it was not suitable. Charles

Williams being spoken to, gave up to it, and is now, agreeably, with me. On Sixth-day, made several calls, with my dear Friends, S. Hillman, and others; and Seventh-day, went to Westtown. Attended both the morning and evening meetings, to satisfaction. My visit there was very interesting, both as respects the conduct and appearance of the pupils, and the general management of the school; and I enjoyed myself there as much as I could expect, considering the weight of exercise in view of the prospect before me. I try to keep the sack-cloth as much within as possible. Ah, truly the Spirit beareth witness that bonds and afflictions await. We expect to set off tomorrow for New England. May the Lord, in his condescending mercy, be pleased to be near in every time of conflict, and sustain by his everlasting Arm underneath. Whether suffering or rejoicing be meted out, may He have the praise of his own works.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Nothing appears between this letter and the following:

Philadelphia, Sixth Month 28th.—Left this city in company with James R. Greeves, and lodged at the house of our dear ancient Friend, Ezra Comfort. Went to Pottstown on the 29th, and had a small meeting in the afternoon with the few members, and others there. Felt peace of mind in the faithful discharge of allotted duty.

First-day, 30th.—At Exeter Meeting, wherein strength was afforded to open the doctrines of the Gospel in the “demonstration of the Spirit,” through the immediate assistance of our blessed and holy Head. May the praise be ascribed unto Him who is worthy forevermore.

Second-day, Seventh Month 1st.—Attended meeting at Maiden Creek, which was owned by the presence of the

Head of the Church. The spring of life flowed freely in a line of encouraging communications to some exercised travailing children to hold on their way, and devote themselves unreservedly unto Him whose right it is to be "Head over all things to his Church." Some were affectionately addressed, who had suffered the things of time to engross their attention, so as to obstruct the growth of the good seed. The meeting ended in fervent supplication to the Lord for the continuance of his gracious regard, that his poor, dependent children might be supported and strengthened to stand in their allotments. May praise and thanksgiving be ascribed unto Him forevermore.

Third-day, crossed the Blue Mountains to the house of David Masters, at Greenwood ; and the next day attended meeting there, which was a season of mourning, under a sense of the low state of the Church. Way at length opened to discharge myself to some careless, nominal professors ; and also a word of encouragement to some of the youth. Left in peace, and rode to Muncy ; and attended meeting there on Fifth-day ; and though the life of religion seemed to be at a low ebb, strength was given to throw off the weight of the exercise in close dealing towards the lifeless professors ; while the language of encouragement flowed freely to the honest-hearted. Set out on Sixth-day morning for Elkland, on the Allegheny Mountains ; the scenery on the way was delightful. Arrived at Joel McCarty's in good time in the evening. He had recently buried his wife, who had been a valuable minister and "Deborah" in that place. In the morning had some religious service in the family, which, I hope, may be remembered. Attended meeting near Anthony Kilmer's, on First-day, the 7th, which was large and laborious, but was favored to find relief by honest labor.



Second-day, rode back to Muncy, to the house of our kind Friend, H. Ecroyd. After breakfast, had a very solemn parting opportunity, and then rode to Pottsville. Having felt my mind drawn towards the inhabitants of this place, I had a meeting appointed at early candle-light. The meeting was small, but solid; and, I trust, the good cause did not suffer thereby.

Sixth-day.—Had a meeting at Robeson, which was an open time.

Seventh-day.—At Nantmeal; the state of Society very low. A number of other people came in, and it proved an open time. May the Lord have the praise of all his works. In the afternoon, at Uwchlan; an open, satisfactory meeting:

First-day, 14th.—At Downingtown in the forenoon; an open, good meeting. Ability was afforded to open, in a good degree, in the “demonstration of the Spirit and of power,” the doctrines of the Gospel; showing the difference between the worship under the legal dispensation and that instituted under the Gospel. In the afternoon at Westchester; a very crowded meeting. The weather being oppressively warm, rendered it trying; and though the life did not rise so high as is sometimes the case, there was a liberty granted to declare the “unsearchable riches of Christ,” and found relief.

Second-day.—At Birmingham; which was a season of favor. At Bradford in the afternoon; which was an open, heavenly meeting. May the Lord be praised. Lodged at the house of our dear Friends, Samuel and Ann Cope, where we were sweetly refreshed, both in body and mind.

Third-day.—At East Caln and West Caln; both good meetings, the Lord’s power being manifested, and the gospel of Christ preached, I trust, in the “demonstration of

the Spirit and of power ;” which, blessed be his holy name, reigned over all. Next, at Sadsbury and Bart ; which were seasons of Divine favor. Oh, my soul ! mayst thou forever bow before Him who hath dealt marvellously with thee, and yield obedience unto Him in the future steps of thy pilgrimage, for He is worthy to be served forever and forevermore.

Sixth-day. —At East Sadsbury. Found relief and peace in close labor to some worldly-minded professors, with a solemn warning to flee from the wrath to come ; that they might lay hold on eternal life, and be found among the living in Jerusalem. The word of encouragement flowed freely to some, particularly to the youth, to give up to follow the blessed Captain of salvation in the way of his holy requirings. In the end it proved a good time. At Fallowfield in the afternoon, which was also a good meeting. It is the Lord’s doing, and marvellous in our eyes. Indeed, to me it is remarkable, that a door of utterance has been so opened for me. May the Lord have the praise.

Seventh-day.—At London Grove and West Grove ; both open, good meetings, particularly the latter.

First-day, 21st.—Called to see a dear, aged Friend, who is blind : the word of encouragement flowed through my heart to her, and her husband who was also infirm. Attended London-Britain in the morning ; and New Garden in the evening. The Lord’s power was present for the help of his people, and the day closed peacefully. “Return unto thy rest, O, my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee !” and may I stand resigned, and devoted to the service of my divine Master, until He may proclaim a release from further service in this land, that I may be permitted to return to my dear wife and children with the reward of peace.

Second-day.—At Hokessin, and Kennet; both seasons of renewed favor. In the former I was led to speak closely yet tenderly, to some who are in the earlier walks of life, to give up to follow the blessed Shepherd of the sheep who would lead them from the vanities of the world into an earnest concern for the salvation of their own souls. And to those in more advanced life; that they might be found faithful, showing forth his praise who has “called them to glory and to virtue.” The latter was an open, yet rather a laborious time; and at the close I felt the sentence of death within myself. O, how we poor finite creatures are dealt with! that no flesh may glory in his presence.

Third-day.—At Concord, where strength was afforded to discharge apprehended duty. The meeting closed in prayer for the blessing of preservation of the flock and family scattered abroad, that strength might be vouchsafed “earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.” But O! I feel a jealousy and fear, lest I may move improperly in the solemn embassy in which I am engaged. Thou, O Lord, knowest my heart; that it would be grievous indeed to leave thee—the living fountain! Be pleased to keep me as a little child, that I may adopt the language, “Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done.” Dined at N. and P. M.’s, very pleasantly. It is cheering to call upon those whom we can feel in the covenant of life. Rode to Wilmington, and attended meeting there on Fourth-day, to satisfaction.

Fifth-day.—At Chichester and Chester, which were relieving opportunities. May the Lord’s name be praised who is worthy forevermore. Lodged at the house of Jesse J. Maris.

Here he writes to A. B., as follows:—

Chichester, Pa., Seventh Month 25th, 1844.

Dearly beloved friend, A. B.—I have felt my mind sweetly turned towards thee this morning in the covenant of life, even that in which the Lord's humble and dependent ones know, and feel one another, though far separated; and wherein they are permitted to drink together of the cup of suffering; even the sufferings of Christ which are behind, for his body's sake, which is the church. These being brought into the same school—the school of Christ—they can understand each other, speaking the same language, and minding the same thing; and it is a blessed privilege they have, in the Master's time, to rejoice together, and to bless and praise Him for his loving kindness to them; also that they have been accounted worthy to suffer for his sake; and as they thus abide, he will enable them to arise and “anoint the shield,” and go forth against his and their enemies. Ah! the work is the Lord's; and in every step taken the solemn language is applicable, “Who is sufficient for these things.” Nothing short of divine power daily communicated, can renew the “cruse,” and qualify for the allotted portion of service.

It is a day in which the ambassadors of peace have, in many places, to “weep bitterly,” under a sense of the deceivableness of unrighteousness. Ah! in many ways the enemy of the church is at work; and perhaps in no one particular has he proved more sorrowfully successful, than in a worldly, deceptively delusive spirit, which is at work in the “camp.” Unwilling to bear the cross, though, at the same time, insinuating a love for the Society, and is secretly working, like a mole under-ground, to destroy the root, and would gladly modify Quakerism so as to suit the views of other people better—more congenial to the world's

ways, worship and ministry ; and thus lead back into that which our dear forefathers were gathered out of.

As respects my visit to New England ; I thought I felt an evidence of being in my place ; though, of all the seasons of suffering I ever had to endure, I think that exceeded. The language respecting our divine Master was very forcibly brought to view ; “ He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Also ; “ It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house, Beelzebub, how much more them of his household.” Thou hast, no doubt, had particulars of my visit. There is a remnant of faithful, honest-hearted Friends there, for whom I deeply felt and sympathized, having frequent opportunities with them, which were heart-tendering seasons. O ! may the Lord, who knoweth the hearts of his people, take his cause more immediately into his own hands, and make it more and more manifest who are his, that the oppressors of the seed might be brought to see the awfully dangerous ground they are standing upon, that they might “ repent and live.”

I may acknowledge that notwithstanding “ tribulations have abounded,” I humbly trust, “ grace has also abounded ;” having been favored to get along thus far, in the limits of this Yearly Meeting to the relief and peace of my own mind ; which I more and more feel to be of divine mercy. Oh ! it seems to me more clearly than ever before that this treasure is in earthen vessels ; vouchsafed unto us for the honor of his own eternal name, that the excellency of the power may evidently appear to be of God, and not of us : that the creature may indeed be kept in the very dust. I feel a sweet and heavenly unity with thee, my dear sister. O, it is a blessed thing to be scholars

in the same school of Christ ! These are born of the incorruptible seed, and can, and do suffer for and with each other ; and with their divine Master for the body's sake, which is the church ; and therefore in due time He will be unto them the " resurrection and the life." O ! mayst thou, and all the Lord's faithful servants be encouraged, devotedly to persevere in his service ; for such may rest assured He will keep them in the " hollow of his holy hand," and " no evil shall befall them, nor any plague come nigh."

Thy friend,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Sixth-day.—At Middletown and Goshen meetings ; and at Whiteland on Seventh-day, which were solid good meetings. Paid a visit to a dear young woman who has been confined two years and two months, the most of the time in a recumbent position. She appeared to be in a very peaceful state of mind ; and it was a privilege to be with her. Also paid a visit to Yardley and Hannah Warner ; and feeling my mind drawn towards them in the love of the gospel ; in the flowing thereof, I was led in a sitting with them, to speak forth the language of encouragement ; and in a particular manner to Hannah. O, I do believe the good hand is at work, and in due time, if faithfulness is yielded to, there will be a coming forth in the ministry.

First-day, 28th.—At Willistown and Springfield ; both favored meetings, particularly the former. Lodged at the house of my dear friends, Joseph and Hannah Rhoads. Attended Darby Meeting on Second-day, and stopped at the house of Samuel Rhoads, where I met with dear Hannah Gibbons, who is a lively-spirited handmaid of the



Lord. Arrived in the city in the evening, and lodged at the house of my kind companion, James R. Greeves.

Thus closes the account of this visit, except what is contained in the following extract of a letter to his wife:—

Philadelphia, Seventh Month 30th, 1844.

My dear Wife:—My companion, J. R. G. and myself, have been diligently engaged in visiting meetings, having had for four days past two meetings a day; and the weather being very warm, I felt almost worn down last evening. I think I never was more sensible of injury from hard labor; but felt anxious to get through what is before me by the time of Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting, which will occur the first Second-day in next month.

We have but one meeting each for to-day and to-morrow, and on Sixth-day, two again. We also expect to attend Abington Quarter, which will occur on the 8th of next month; and the next day I think of turning my face towards home, and unless detained on the way, may reach there by the 12th or 13th. My love to all.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

---

Letter to A. B.:—

Sixth Month 21st, 1845.

Dear friend, A. B.:—My spirit salutes thee in the covenant of life, desiring thy encouragement in the work and service of the Lord; having full unity with thee therein; and feeling much for thee on account of the feeble state of thy dear father's health, as also, in my measure, with thee in the deep baptisms and trials to be

endured by those who go forth as ambassadors for the King of peace. And very earnestly do I desire for thee, as for my own soul, that a firm and steadfast abidance may be known in Him who has hitherto helped, giving an understanding of his will concerning us from day to day. Oh, my soul can say, under some sense of feeling, that the Shepherd of the sheep is good and gracious—worthy to be waited for and followed, in every step we take, with the most entire dedication. Then, dear sister, go on in his service, and I firmly believe that his own little dependent followers will be cared for, and strength administered, day by day, just in such a way and time as will give indisputable evidence that it is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes.

It has been my lot to witness a depth of suffering for some weeks past; the enemy being permitted to buffet and upbraid; but through Divine mercy, I seem to have got a little over it. My soul feels humbly thankful to the Lord for his matchless mercy; and may I be willing to follow Him through every permitted trial, that "neither heights nor depths, things present nor to come," may separate from Him, the beloved of my soul. Ah, the present is a peculiarly trying day to the Church. Her living members realize it to be so. May they be favored to keep near to her holy Head in living exercise and prayer for the flock and family; and thus a qualification will be received of Him, to be as "saviours upon Mount Zion," by and through his immediate puttings forth, both as regards the great and important duty of solemn worship, as well as the exercise of the discipline of the Church. For this compromising spirit of modified Quakerism has the same injurious, lifeless tendency, both in worship and discipline. It leads into a lifeless, frothy ministry,—not being under

the cross, but disposed to shun it; though, as to words, it may be pretty sound; while to those whose ears can try words as the mouth tasteth meat, it is unsavory and superficial. It also leads to a lifeless management of the discipline; the Lord's power not being waited for, a light and unfeeling routine of business in our meetings for discipline is the consequence.

Oh, how the poor baptized members of the body—those who, like the “chosen in Gideon's army,” are found bowed very low,—do mourn because of the prevalence of such a spirit. May they faithfully keep their ranks in righteousness, for the Lord is on his way for their deliverance; yea, the day will come when the “watchmen on the walls of Zion” may “send presents of this kind, one unto another,” with grateful acknowledgments that “Truth prospers,”—that the “Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.” Then, indeed, may it be said: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that sayeth unto Zion: thy God reigneth.”

Thy lines of Ninth Month last, accompanied by a letter of more recent date, came duly to hand, and were gratefully received. I may say, I have derived instruction from the writings of that devoted servant of the Lord, John Barclay. I earnestly desire to be found “pressing after the prize,” which he kept so steadily in view; and through the power of living faith was, no doubt, enabled to obtain. Ah, indeed, there is a sweet unity with the living, faithful followers of the Lamb; even those who, having “fought the good fight, and kept the faith,” are entered into rest and peace.

The feeling of near and dear love attends thy dear

father in the fellowship of the Gospel. May the dew of heaven, which makes flourishing and fruitful in the house of God, be his portion, even now, in old age, agreeably to the words of the Psalmist: "They that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God; they shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing."

I remain, thy friend,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Letter to T. B. G.:—

Sixth Month 17th, 1846.

Dear friend:—Thine of Eighth Month last came to hand, together with some documents forwarded by thee; and I thought soon to have written a reply, but many engagements have hitherto prevented. I hope, however, that it has not been supposed to have originated from a lack of tender love and sympathy for thee, and many other dear Friends in that part of the heritage; but as the matter has revived this morning, with some degree of sweetness, I very willingly communicate the desire of my heart for thy and your preservation in the unchangeable Truth; believing that He who gathered us in the beginning from the many forms and ceremonies, instituted by the wisdom, and in the will of man, into the covenant of light and life, as we are faithful to Him, will never leave nor forsake us.

O, I do most earnestly desire, that all our dear Friends, both there and here, as well as in every other part of the Lord's vineyard, whose eyes have been anointed to see the deceivableness of unrighteousness, whereby the enemy is endeavoring to lead away from the true foundation; to modify our high and holy profession, rendering it more

agreeable to the views of other people, that there may be less cross to bear, may stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free; being willing to suffer, whether from pretended friends or open enemies; and as Divine assistance is vouchsafed, to rejoice in being accounted worthy to suffer for his great name and Truth's sake. May the remnant in that part of the heritage, who have had to drink deeply of the cup of suffering—the persecuted little flock—be encouraged to lift up their heads in hope, for the day of their redemption draweth nigh. Oh, keep inward to the Lord, moving in his counsel; thus you will be kept in the meekness and gentleness of Christ, under his government, which will do more for you than all the arguments that can be adduced in the time and wisdom of man.

I feel deeply for you on the approach of your Yearly Meeting, desiring that the blessed Head of the church may be near, furnishing with wisdom and strength to move therein to his honor, and the promotion of that cause which is the most dignified that mortal man can participate in. In a very lively manner do I remember the sympathy which clothed my mind when with you a few years ago; at which time, I trust, I was, in my measure, a sharer in the “afflictions of Christ, which are behind, for his body's sake, which is the church;” and witnessed the true Christian sympathy whereby we are enabled to remember, and to feel for those “in bonds, as bound with them; and those who suffer adversity, as being also in the body.”

It is cause of deep humiliation to those who through the Lord's unutterable mercies are brought into the blessed “lot of inheritance,” and to “sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;” that He hath vouchsafed his loving kindness, and tender compassion in giving them to know

a settlement on the "Rock of Ages," and to feel at the same time, that "it is not by might, nor by power" of their own, that they are favored therewith ; but of his abundant love : hence in meekness and gratitude they will be found returning thanks unto God therefor, whilst they will be led deeply to feel for, and to pity those who have been captivated and led away from the "footsteps of the flock of Christ."

Many dear friends are very fresh in my remembrance, to whom I desire a message of dear love in our Lord Jesus Christ.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Letter to A. B.:—

Second Month 15th, 1847.

Dear friend A. B.:—Thy very acceptable letter came duly to hand, reviving feelings of gospel fellowship. The poor tribulated followers of the Lamb are favored to feel one for another in their respective allotments ; to drink together of the same cup, though it may be that of affliction : and sometimes even the "wine of astonishment" may be therein. O ! if it were not for the mercy and compassionate regard of our holy "high priest and advocate with the Father," what would become of us ? He knoweth our frame ; that we are but dust.

Amidst all the conflicts of flesh and spirit, we cannot doubt the faithfulness of the Lord ; though He may cause to "pass through the waters." His presence, though unseen by us, will be near to bear up and thus qualify his servants and handmaids for his service. Ah ! it is through "deaths oft" that they are brought into a capacity, in which the King Eternal sees meet to entrust them with his treasures : like the "good scribe" bringing "forth out of his treasure



things new and old:"—new, because in the fresh openings of divine life: and old, because it is of, and from that which is from everlasting; that changeth not.

My dear friend, I desire thy encouragement in the work of the Lord. May "the arms of thy hands be made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob." This is truly a day in which the baptized members of the Church are clothed with mourning on account of the oppressed state of the true seed. It is to be feared that many of the members who remained on the side of Truth in a storm recently passed by, are, nevertheless, so much on the surface—have so little of that living, upright zeal, originating in a faithful attention to the voice of the good Shepherd, which so eminently characterized the sons of the morning of our day—that they are in a sad condition to bear another storm. And it appears evident that the day is approaching that will try the foundation. I have greatly desired that the "watchers upon the walls of Zion," who are standing in the authority and dignity of her King, may be kept near unto Him, whereby they may be qualified to attend to any little service required at their hands, with that singleness of heart which becomes their high and "holy calling." It seems to me there never was a time in which the necessity was more binding upon us to stand in our allotments, with "lamps trimmed" and "lights burning."

Though much poverty has of late been my portion, yet, at times, through Divine mercy, light has sprung up, to the removing of every doubt. Oh, how good it is to "wait patiently for the Lord to incline his ear unto us and hear our cry;" to pluck our "feet out of the miry clay, and set them upon a rock;" putting "a new song into our mouths, even praises unto our God."

My earnest desire for myself is, that I may be kept in the line of Divine appointment; being willing to be stripped of every dependence, save upon the almighty Arm of power immediately made known; that in the steps yet to be taken, I may be enabled to adopt the passive language: "Not my will, but thine, be done."

Oh, it is no matter how much of the cross we have to bear, how humiliating to the creature the leadings of the good Shepherd may be, (as truly it is, to be bound and carried where the natural part "would not,") so that we may be found in the Divine ordering; and, though sensible that the "Spirit beareth witness in every city saying that bonds and afflictions abide," be enabled to say: "None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."

I conclude, and remain thy friend and companion in tribulation, and desire to be in the faith and patience of Jesus Christ.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING AND ITS BRANCHES.

HAVING felt my mind drawn to visit, in the love of the Gospel, some of the meetings composing the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia, as also to attend that meeting, and having obtained the concurrence of Friends for that pur-

pose, I set out, leaving my dear wife and children, the 10th of Fourth Month, 1847, and reached the city on the 14th of the same. I attended meeting at Arch street the next day, wherein silence appeared to be my lot. There was much vocal service; but if there were any mighty works done, I was not sensible of it.

Sixth-day, 16th.—Attended the Meeting for Sufferings, to good satisfaction.

Seventh-day.—The Select Yearly Meeting; a low time. Several communications to little purpose. On entering upon the business of the meeting, the clerk read all the minutes of the strangers present, except those from New England. He then informed the meeting that there were several minutes from New England, but as the subject of correspondence with that body was referred by the minutes of last Yearly Meeting, he thought it would be right to omit the reading of them, which was united with, though divers opposed it, urging the reading of them.

First-day, forenoon.—At the North Meeting. Sat in silent suffering under the exercise of a light, frothy ministry. In the afternoon, at the same place, to satisfaction. Went to the house of our valued Friend, Ezra Comfort, Jr.; walked over to see an aged blind Friend, and had a solid season of retirement in the family. I trust it was an opportunity of profit to some.

Third-day.—At Solebury and Wrightstown; the former, a good meeting; the latter, a laborious time. My mind was clothed with mourning on account of the unfaithfulness of some under our name.

Fourth-day.—Attended Monthly Meeting at Middletown.

Fifth-day.—At Falls, to satisfaction; Truth having the dominion. Attended meetings at Byberry, Bristol, Tren-

ton and Byberry again ; the latter, a small, but comfortable meeting.

Feeling my mind drawn towards the poor convicts in the Pennsylvania Penitentiary, I proceeded there on Second-day, 26th, in company with my dear friend and companion, Joseph Hobson, and also John Kite, where we found about three hundred prisoners. Our friend, Thomas Scattergood, being warden, went with us, and we visited a number of their cells ; had six different opportunities with the prisoners. I felt constrained to press upon them the necessity of attention to the gift of Divine grace in their hearts, that would show them their sinful condition, and lead them to repentance and amendment of life, and thus be prepared when their time should expire, to go and sin no more. After the close of the first sitting, we passed by the cell of a poor woman, who called to the warden, saying she wanted to speak to the Friends. We went into her cell, and found her with tears rolling down her cheeks, and weeping aloud. My feelings were turned towards her in tenderness, and I told her to take heed to the gift of God in her own heart, which had shown her the exceeding sinfulness of her ways, that she might experience true repentance, and the forgiveness of her sins, and have comfort in her solitary cell. I felt peace for this act of dedication.

Third-day.—At Frankford Monthly Meeting, which was a good meeting.

Fourth-day, 28th.—At Germantown and Abington ; the former was an open, relieving opportunity ; the latter, in the forepart, was heavy and laborious. Found relief in faithfully discharging apprehended duty.

Fifth-day.—At Gwynedd Monthly Meeting ; which was, through Divine mercy, a good meeting. May thanksgiv-

ing and praise be returned unto Zion's King. Lodged with our dear friend and father in the Church, Ezra Comfort.

Sixth-day.—At Plymouth; a favored meeting, the blessed Head of the Church being near. The meeting at Horsham, on Seventh-day, was a time to be remembered, because Truth reigned over all. May the Lord have the praise; and may all that is within me bow in humble prostration before Him who is able to exalt his great and holy name over all opposition. Rode to Plumstead, and attended meeting there on First-day, to satisfaction.

Second-day, 3d of Fifth Month.—Attended Monthly Meeting at Buckingham; which, through Divine mercy, was a heavenly meeting, strength being given to labor honestly with the careless; while the language of encouragement flowed freely to the mourners in Zion.

First-day, 9th.—Attended meeting at Trenton, to satisfaction.

Second-day.—At Evesham and Cropwell; both favored meetings.

Third-day.—At Haddonfield; thence towards Salem, to attend that Quarter.

Fourth-day.—Attended the Select Quarterly Meeting; and the Quarterly Meeting for Discipline, on Fifth-day; which was a favored time. May the praise be returned to Him who is "Head over all things to his Church." Lodged with our dear, aged friend, John Sheppard.

Sixth-day.—At Greenwich; which was a time, I trust, to be remembered. Truth had the dominion.

Having felt my mind drawn towards the inhabitants of Bridgeton, we had a meeting there in the afternoon, which was very small, though solemn and quiet; and I trust the

good cause did not suffer thereby. Returned to Philadelphia, and attended the Southern and Northern meetings on First-day, 16th, which were favored opportunities, and greatly to my relief. O! it is of the Lord's mercy that ability can be received to labour in the church of Christ.

Second-day.—At Concord Select Quarterly Meeting, to our comfort.

Third-day.—At the Quarterly Meeting. A season of renewed favor. May my soul be bowed in prostration before the Lord, and kept daily and hourly in a state of humility; knowing that it is of his mercy.

Went to Westtown, and lodged, and had a satisfactory meeting in that Institution the next day. The divine blessing rests upon it. Went to the house of Aaron Sharpless; our dear friend Mary Kite living there. Had a time of refreshment in an opportunity in the evening. Went towards London Grove to attend the Western Select Quarterly Meeting there. A time of favor. Lodged at the house of Morris Cope.

Sixth-day.—At the Quarterly Meeting. An open time. Returned to the city, and having felt my mind drawn towards the inhabitants not of our Society, more particularly the laboring class, seamen, &c., the matter was laid before the select members, which was united with, and notice given of a meeting at Arch street on First-day evening. Oh, the awfulness of the step!—the appointment of a meeting of that character. My feelings could not be described; but felt satisfied and peaceful in having given up to what I believed to be the pointings of the good Shepherd. Paid a number of visits to Friends in the city, to my own peace, and their comfort; viz: E. Pitfield, S. Hillman, J. Kite, &c.

First-day morning, 23rd.—At Arch Street. A solid



meeting. The spirit of supplication was poured out, and strength given to intercede for the poor of the flock, that their faith might be increased; that "heights nor depths, things present nor to come, might be able to separate them from the love of God." That, as many had been removed from the church militant, to the church triumphant; particularly of these who were pillars in the Lord's house, that he would turn his hand upon the middle aged, and those that are younger; and through the operation of the same Divine Power that made them what they were, many might be fitted for their stations in the church, to his honor. In the afternoon attended the same meeting, but was silent.

At the time appointed in the evening, at the meeting at Arch Street, which was largely attended, and very quiet; and was to me a relieving opportunity. O, how awful the responsibility of appointing meetings out of Society! Surely none are sufficient for these things, but as they receive strength from on high.

Took leave of many dear friends at the close of the meeting in a feeling of gospel fellowship, and set out for home. Through divine mercy we were favored to reach there on Fourth-day the 26th of the month, and found my dear family well.

## CHAPTER X.

ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO THE FAMILIES OF CHESTERFIELD  
MONTHLY MEETING, AND THE MEETINGS OF RED-STONE  
QUARTER.

HAVING felt my mind drawn to visit in the love of the gospel, the families of Chesterfield Monthly Meeting, and the meetings of Red-stone Quarter, and having the concurrence of our Monthly Meeting therein, I left my dear family under great discouragement of mind ; but He whose compassions fail not, condescended in mercy to bear up my tribulated spirit. My valued friend Edmund Bailey bearing me company, we reached Chesterfield, and attended the Monthly Meeting there, the 15th of Fourth Month, 1848. It was a painful, trying meeting ; and silent as to ministry.

In looking towards the accomplishment of the awfully solemn duty of going from house to house ; it appeared to me to be my place to proceed without any pilot. This was owing to party feeling, and a disposition for too much talking one about another ; and we found best help to be near from place to place, and ability afforded many times to dip into the states of families and individuals, to our great humiliation, and, I trust, it was a renewed visitation to many. May praise and thanksgiving be returned unto Him who gave the ability, to whom alone it is due. We visited one hundred and forty families in less than two weeks, and returned to my dear family on the 29th instant, in peace ; though much fatigued and worn down, both in body and mind.

First-day, Fifth Month 14th, 1848.—In our meeting at Ridge, the fore-part was rather dull and heavy; but life sprang up, and strength was given to labor in some degree of that ability which is from Him who is the Head of his church, setting forth the necessity of bearing the cross of Christ, that we might inherit the crown: and the meeting ended well. May I be preserved in the path of allotted duty, being willing to endure the refining baptisms that may be permitted to attend; that when He who is the resurrection and the life may see meet, the shield may be anointed with heavenly oil, to the praise and the glory of his great name.

First-day, 21st.—Favored with something of those refreshings which come from the presence of the Lord, in silent waiting in our meeting to-day at Ridge. O, may I be preserved in an earnest breathing and travail of soul before the Lord! that I may be thoroughly washed in the river of judgment, and enabled to show forth the praise of Him who hath “called to glory and to virtue;” that in thought, word and deed, all may be brought to the obedience of Christ. In viewing retrospectively the mercies of a gracious God, all within me was humbled before Him, with earnest petitions to be preserved near unto Him, who is the resurrection and the life.

Sixth Month 4th.—Set out for Red stone, in company with my dear friend, Ralph Cowgill. Arrived in the neighborhood of Westland the 6th, and attended meetings at Westland, Pike-Run, Sewickly, Providence, Centre and Red-stone; some of which were favored meetings, particularly, Providence and Centre. In some of the others my mind was clothed with mourning on account of a root of bitterness and disaffection which has crept in, in consequence of the unsound doctrines of J. J. Gurney—or modi-

fied Quakerism—one of the deeply laid snares of the enemy of the church, to prevent her from filling that place and station designed for her by her glorified Head. O, may He, by the brightness of his coming, destroy every false covering, that the people may see through these snares, and make their escape!

Returned home peacefully the 13th of the month, and found my dear family well.

Letter to A. B. :—

First Month 13th, 1849.

Dear friend A. B. :—Feeling my mind drawn towards thee in true Christian sympathy and gospel fellowship, I have been induced to pen a few lines to thee; believing that speaking one unto another, even in this way, when it is done from the fresh openings of the good Shepherd, is strengthening to poor pilgrims who feel for one another, and at times pray for one another. O, may I be preserved an object worthy a place in the minds of the living! whatsoever may be the trials that attend; and truly I can say I never needed it more than at this time, and although my portion of late has been trials and deep provings, I hope never to distrust the goodness and mercy of the Lord; which unworthy as I am, I have been a sharer of in days past.

But to go forth on such an embassy as the one before me is enough to bring the creature very low, feeling my great weakness for such a service. Many times could I say with that deeply tried servant of the Lord, Thomas Scattergood, “If thou, O Lord! go not forth with me, take me not hence.” There is, however, a revival of faith, at times, in the unfailing mercy of the good Shepherd; and the poor soul is strengthened to look forward in humble

hope that divine support will be vouchsafed to fulfil the service that may be required ; and be preserved from doing harm ; which, with the language of “ unprofitable servant ” indelibly fixed upon my heart, is all I ask. My portion very often has been a sense of extreme poverty, yet the remembrance of my dear friends is at times very precious, of which number thou art one ; having no doubt of thy concern to be found faithful to thy divine Master ; neither have I any doubt of his watchful care over thee. Mayst thou be encouraged under whatever trials and afflictions may attend thee, whether they be spiritual or temporal, to follow the good Shepherd whom thou hast known, when He hath put forth, to go before ; and to be mouth and wisdom, tongue and utterance.

Ah ! there is a place of safety for all the Lord’s faithful servants and handmaids ; where they may not only experience their “ place of defence to be the munitions of rocks ; bread to be given them, and their waters sure,” but to be so replenished with heavenly virtue as to be as “ saviours upon Mount Zion, judging the Mount of Esau,” that the “ kingdom may be the Lord’s.”

Amidst the trials which abound at the present day, it is a comforting reflection that all these things will come to an end : that the Lord will make a way for his own oppressed seed, and cause the afflictions that are meted out to conduce to the purification of the church : that she may be seen coming up from the wilderness “ leaning upon her beloved ; fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.” I do believe that brighter days are coming ; may patience then as well as faith hold out ; and entire dependence be placed in the unfailing mercy of the Shepherd of Israel, who, in his own time will redeem his faithful children out of all their troubles. I have

often thought of thy dear aunt E., and have no doubt her exercise of spirit on behalf of herself and the church, comes up as a sweet memorial before God. Give my love affectionately to her.

I conclude, and remain, I hope, thy true friend,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

### ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO THE MEETINGS BELONGING TO NORTH CAROLINA YEARLY MEETING.

FEELING my mind drawn to visit in the love of the gospel, the meetings of North Carolina Yearly Meeting; and having obtained the necessary certificate of the unity of Friends therefor; I took a solemn leave of my dear wife and children, the 31st of First Month, 1849: committing them, with my own soul, unto the Lord. May He be pleased to strengthen her, who is my chief earthly comfort, and endue her with fortitude and wisdom, to go in and out before our children; and to keep them from evil, and cause the seed which He has sown in their hearts, to grow and bring forth fruit to his praise.

Lodged at R. Cowgill's, where my friend Abraham Packer met me in order to accompany me in my prospect. Set out on Fifth-day morning, the 1st of Second Month, and reached Red-stone Quarterly Meeting on Seventh-day; wherein sorrow covered my mind, on account of the disunity occasioned by the unsound writings that are sanctioned among us. I had the reward of peace in attending to the portion of service required.



Attended meeting at Centre on First-day, to satisfaction ; and set out on Second-day morning towards Winchester ; and arrived on Fifth-day, the 8th. Thence to Lynchburg, and rested one day. There being a few individuals in the town who profess with Friends, they were invited in to see us, and we had a religious opportunity together ; but was a low trying time on account of a lack of religious concern. Left on Sixth-day morning for North Carolina, and arrived at Hopewell on Seventh-day evening, and attended that meeting on First-day. After resting a few days at the house of our dear friends Dougan and Asenath Clark, we attended New Garden Meeting, to satisfaction.

Fifth-day 22nd.—At Centre ; which though small, was a solid, good meeting.

Sixth-day.—At Back-Creek Select Quarterly Meeting ; and at the Quarterly Meeting for discipline the next day. On First-day, attended a large public meeting at the same place, wherein the Head of the church was pleased to give ability to declare the “ unsearchable riches of Christ,” in the demonstration of the Spirit. May the praise be ascribed unto Him alone to whom it is due.

Next attended meetings at Uharee, Bethel, Pine-Ridge, Holly-Spring, Marlborough, and Marlborough Monthly Meeting, held at Salem ; the latter a time of favor.

First-day, Third Month 4th.—At Springfield. Thankfulness clothed my mind this morning under a sense of the unmerited mercy of the Head of the church, in opening a way where there seemed to be none. Truly my soul can in some degree of feeling, adopt the language of the Psalmist, “ What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest ? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back ? ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams ; and ye little hills, like lambs ? ” May my soul bless and praise the name of the Lord our

God, who remains to be “wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.”

First-day afternoon, at Kennet; wherein Truth reigned. “Return unto thy rest, O my soul! for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.”

On the 5th and 6th at Piney-Woods and Deep-River. In the latter I was led to open the difference between that faith which overcomes the world, and that which is overcome by the world.

Extract of a letter to A. B.:—

Third Month 7th, 1849.

My beloved friend A. B.:—In a feeling of that love which has long subsisted between us, I address a few lines to thee, and acknowledge the receipt of thine at the hand of A. Packer, which was very acceptable, and served as an encouragement to my deeply tried mind.

It has not, I think, been my lot to experience deeper baptisms than have been my portion of late, and particularly on our way to this land,—wisely dispensed, no doubt, as a preparatory dispensation for the allotted portion of service. Oh, may I be kept so near my Divine Lord and Master in deep travail of soul, that I may be permitted to enter into sympathy and suffering with the seed, which is borne down in many instances as a “cart loaded,” that I may be so given up and devoted to his service in this journey, that one hour may not be spent in gratifying the creature, nor one thought indulged which does not centre in that submissive language: “Not my will, but thine, be done.”

In going from place to place, we have had, to our great comfort, the company of Him who formerly sent forth his disciples into “every city and place whither He himself

would come;" and in the midst of deep exercise, has renewed the "cruse" from day to day; so that if the query was addressed: "Lacked ye anything?" the responding language, under a sense of unmerited mercy, must be: "Nothing, Lord;" and yet, often stripped, and so empty as a vessel can be; and, perhaps, I may indulge the hope that I am learning a little of that lesson that an apostle speaks of, when he says: "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Many are the exercises which the servants and handmaids of the Lord have to pass through for Zion's sake, as well as frequent baptismal washings, to make them clean and keep them so. I desire, as regards myself, that none of them may be withheld which Infinite Wisdom may see meet for me; and truly, my soul can, under a sense of the Lord's gracious dealings, adopt the language of the Psalmist: "What ailed thee, oh, thou sea!" &c.

Way has been made for us without any effort of our own, to my humbling admiration. Last Second-day morning we paid a visit to our ancient friend, Mahlon Hocket. He appears to be in a comfortable, innocent state of mind. After spending a little time in pleasant conversation, the company dropped into silence, at the close of which he said: "I must acknowledge that I feel thankful for this opportunity. I have felt the savor of life to refresh my spirit."

My dear sister, I hope thou wilt be encouraged to a faithful occupancy of the talents committed to thy trust. I feel myself to be a poor little one, much more fit to be ministered unto than to minister; yet, perhaps I may say, that there is encouragement for all the Lord's faithful servants, to stand as with their loins girded, and their feet unfettered, waiting and watching at their posts, that

when the command may be given to go forth into service, they may, with willing, confiding hearts, commit themselves, and their all into his holy hand; and as they stand in the obedience of faith, He will take care of them and his cause. I remain, in the fellowship of the Gospel,

Thy friend,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Fourth-day, 7th.—At Concord, to satisfaction; and the three following days, at Centre, Providence and Rocky River; in the last of which strength was afforded to discharge allotted service; though sadness covers my mind from meeting to meeting, under a sense of the suffering of the true seed. May the Lord of Sabaoth make a way for it, that the Church may arise from the wilderness state she is in, and shine in her ancient beauty.

First-day, 11th.—Were at Cane Creek, where was a large mixed assembly. A Wesleyan Methodist minister having a meeting appointed at the same time, not far from thence, he deferred his meeting until afternoon, and came with his company to Friends' meeting. The meeting was held throughout in silence. My Divine Master showed me plainly that the service He had for me at this time was to set an example of silence; though I had to warn Friends to be on their guard, as I believed there was a snare laid to draw the inexperienced from the Truth as we profess.

In the afternoon, at South-fork, wherein Truth reigned over all. May the praise be ascribed unto the Lord alone, who is forever worthy.

Second-day, were at Spring Meeting, to satisfaction; and set out on Third-day morning towards Contentnea, and arrived at T. Kennedy's on Fifth-day morning, in

time to attend their mid-week meeting, at Neuse, which was very small. Thou, O Lord, knowest how frequent and fervent my petitions are unto thee for preservation! Thou alone canst keep me from falling, and give ability to do thy will, whether in labor or in silent suffering. Oh, that "patience may have her perfect work," that through all the bonds and afflictions that may attend me in the embassy in which I am engaged, thy "everlasting arm may be underneath," that I may experience that "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope," even that which "maketh not ashamed."

Sixth and Seventh-days, at Nahunta and Contentnea; which, though small, were favored meetings.

First-day.—At Neuse again, which was large, and to the relief and peace of my mind. Set out on Second-day morning towards Beaufort, and reached there on Fourth-day evening, 21st; and feeling my mind drawn towards the inhabitants of the town, a place was procured, and notice given for a meeting in the evening, which was pretty well attended. The spiritual nature of the Gospel of Christ was set forth, I trust, in the "demonstration of the Spirit."

Fifth-day.—At Core Sound, with a few members, and some not of our Society, to satisfaction. I felt deeply for the honest-hearted there.

Seventh-day.—Had a meeting at the old Trent meeting-house, with a company of people, some of whom seemed to be as insensible of the solemnity and dignity which becomes the duty of solemn worship, as any I remember ever to have seen in a meeting. Through Divine help I was enabled, in plain honest dealing, to discharge my duty, and left in peace.

Second-day morning.—Started on towards Rich-square but were detained at the Roanoke river nearly twenty-four hours by high wind. During our stay at the river-side we went into the hut of a poor old colored man, who appeared sober and serious. I asked him if he went to meeting. He replied, "No, he was too far off." I asked whether he had any thought about being good. He answered, "Yes! the Lord has done something for poor black man. He showed me the fountain when I was there—pointing to the place where he was in his hut at the time. He asked me if I understood what he meant by the "fountain." I replied in the affirmative. He said the time had been when he took delight in sinning, but now he did not. I encouraged him to take heed to that which had showed him the "fountain," and it would preserve him from evil, and enable him to live as he ought; and in the end he would be happy. He seemed much tendered, and said, "O, if people only could see! but they are blind. I sometimes almost complain of them, but I ought not, for I could not see until my eyes were opened."

We went to the house of one of the overseers of the slaves to get lodging. I think I never suffered more on account of the cruelties exercised towards the poor slaves than while there. The females kept out ploughing in the cold and snow till after sunset; and out next morning before sunrise; and they very poorly clad. Will not the Judge of all the earth visit for these things.

Crossed the river on Fourth-day morning, and rode to Rich-square. It being their meeting-day we attended, though quite late when we got in. Finding it necessary to rest our horses, we tarried at J. Coxe's until Sixth-day morning, and then went towards Piney Woods.



First-day, 1st of Fourth Month, were at that meeting; which, I trust, was a season of favor to some present.

Fourth-day.—At Little River, which, though small, was owned by the Master of assemblies. My spirit has been much depressed in passing through this land, on account of the cruel system of oppression. It led to very serious reflections, and pained my heart to see the hardships practised upon them by a merciless overseer, who thus drives them, regardless of sex, through almost all kinds of weather. I do fully believe that the Judge of all the earth will not suffer this outrage upon every feeling of humanity, as well as Christianity, but by terrible things in righteousness will answer and plead with this highly favored nation until He “break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free.”

Fifth-day and Sixth-days.—At Symonds Creek and Wells meetings, to satisfaction.

Seventh-day.—Attended the Monthly Meeting at Piney-Woods, in which my mind was brought into deep exercise, but strength was afforded to labor to the “stirring up of the pure mind” to faithfulness in divers particulars—the due attendance of our religious meetings, in a lively exercise of mind; the important duty resting upon parents in training up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord was impressively treated upon; and the importance of parents being clear of the blood of their children, set forth.

First-day, 8th.—At Beech Spring, which was a crowded meeting. I was led to show the difference between the law that was written on tables of stone, and the new dispensation, wherein the law is written upon the heart. The meeting was to my relief and peace.

Lodged at N. Winslow's. Some of his children are

members, but he is not. Had some conversation with him in the morning, on the subject of holding slaves ; he having a number. I queried with him whether he had not scruples in his mind on the subject : he confessed he had, and that it was his intention to set them all free : and acknowledged that he had put it off too long. I encouraged him, as life was uncertain, to attend to it the first opportunity ; and he said he would. I had peace of mind for this little act of dedication.

Returned to Rich-square on Third-day ; and felt easy to proceed towards Contentnea on Fourth-day morning ; though, as we passed through towards Pasquotank, I felt desirous to have a meeting, which I mentioned ; but owing to the disunity occasioned by the unsound writings of J. J. Gurney, there was no way opened for it. I felt peace ; believing I had done what was my duty to do. I was thankful to the Lord to be accounted worthy to suffer for his name's sake, in the support of the precious doctrines of the gospel, for the maintenance of which our worthy forefathers suffered so deeply ; every part and parcel of which is incumbent upon us faithfully to maintain, even though it may be through much suffering. Truly they are as well worth suffering for as when those valiant sons of the morning stemmed the torrent of persecution ; being willing to sacrifice all that was near and dear to them in this life—their liberty, their estates, and even life itself—rather than depart from those scriptural views of Christian doctrine and practice which had been opened to them by the Day-spring from on High. All that is within me capable of feeling, is at times awakened on behalf of our beloved Society, with desires that the Lord in his abundant mercy would make bare his holy arm as in ancient days ; that every thing that is not of his own pure spirit may be washed

out by the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of burning, that we might become settled upon the "Rock of Ages."

Attended Monthly Meeting there [probably at Contentnea], and a public meeting on First-day : then proceeded towards New Garden, where we arrived on Fifth-day, 19th, at the house of D. and A. Clark.

Attended Deep-River Quarterly Meeting on Seventh-day ; and the Select Quarter the day before ; and the public meeting on First-day. Our dear friends aforesaid went with us, and had good service. The several sittings, particularly the two last, were seasons of favor.

Here he writes to his wife, the following being an extract thereof:—

New Garden, N. C., Fourth Month 23d, 1849.

My very dear Wife:—We are now at the house of our valued friends D. and A. Clark, in good health. We arrived here on Fifth-day last from the east, where I found two letters from the beloved partner of my life, which did me much good, inasmuch as they bear clear evidence to my mind of the continued care of the good Shepherd over thee, in keeping thee in resignation and acquiescence to his blessed will ; and in enabling thee to dip so feelingly into sympathy with me in the arduous service in which I am engaged. It has been refreshing to my spirit many times, to be sensible that I have the prayers of many that are very dear to me ; even at times when it seemed much like going down among the "iron chariots"—so much opposition in the hearts of the people ; and in many instances mine eyes have seen the wonder-working power of the Lord in opening a way for us, to my humbling admiration. May my soul forever bow in lowest prostration before Him whose work it is, and not our own. May He have the

praise thereof, saith my soul. \* \* \* If we are favored to get along as well as we expect, I shall not probably write any more.

Thy loving husband,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Third-day, 24th.—At Hopewell; in which ability was given to declare the “unsearchable riches of Christ.”

Fourth-day.—At New Garden Monthly Meeting; and at Dover Monthly Meeting on Fifth-day, in which best help was afforded to discharge the allotted portion of service. May the Lord be praised for his abundant mercy, and the poor creature be kept forever in the dust.

Sixth-day.—Rode to Forbush, in Surrey County, and had a meeting there on Seventh-day, at 10 o'clock; and at Deep Creek in the afternoon, to satisfaction. Had the company of that dear Friend and “Israelite, indeed,” John Bond, at the latter, to my comfort. How comforting it is to have the company of those advanced in life, who, like Simeon of old, are waiting for the consolation of Israel.

First-day.—At Hunting Creek; to the relief of my exercised spirit.

Second-day morning, 30th.—Set out on a lonely travel across the mountains into Tennessee. Passed by what is called Fish-spring, which is situated between two high mountains, on the bank of the Wataga River, in Carter County, East Tennessee. It is a boiling spring, and emits water sufficient for a considerable mill stream. The water is clear and cold, and retains its clear appearance for some rods below where it runs into the river; but the most remarkable thing connected with it is, considerable quantities of fish, principally black perch, are caught in a trap just below the spring. They rise from this subterraneous

fountain in the spring of the year, so as to make it a source of income to the owner. It is said that a part of this extraordinary spring is in the bed of the river, and at low water can be seen boiling up, where, it is supposed, the fish make their way into their unknown abode. This fountain seems to be entirely unconnected with the river, and no change discoverable between dry and wet weather. We were favored to reach the settlement at New Hope on Sixth-day, the 4th of Fifth Month, and attended meeting there on First-day, where were many not of our Society. The truths of the everlasting gospel were opened, I trust, in the "demonstration of the Spirit," particularly that of the universality of Divine grace. Paid a visit in the afternoon to a sick Friend, to the peace of my mind.

Second-day morning, set out for Lost Creek, and attended that meeting on Fifth-day, to the relief of my own mind. Thence to Newbury, and attended the Quarterly Meeting there on Seventh-day. My blessed Master was near, and enabled me to discharge the service required. May everlasting praise be given to Him alone.

So far as appears, this closes his labors in this journey.

---

Letter to his daughter:—

Seventh Month 6th, 1849.

Dear ———:—In feelings of dear and tender love, thou and thy dear consort are often in my remembrance; having no doubt of the extensions of heavenly regard towards you; and as you are kept in a daily exercise of soul before the Lord, He will keep you and strengthen you for every service allotted. I noticed with much interest in thy lines to me when in a distant land, thy re-

marks relative to thyself. I would have thee endeavor to stand in the obedience of faith. I doubt not, He whose will is our sanctification, deals with us in perfect wisdom; clothes us with an abiding sense of our utter helplessness and unworthiness; and even sometimes gives to witness the truth of that Scripture, "I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." I see no cause for thee to be dismayed, but rather encouraged to trust in the Lord, in "the Lord Jehovah; for in Him is everlasting strength."

The present is a day of much painful exercise to the living members of the Church; and deeply do I feel for those who are under the preparing hand of the good Shepherd for service, having in my measure had some experience therein; and I am satisfied there never was, nor ever will be, but the one way of safety for these; even an entire dependence upon the good Shepherd; committing the keeping of themselves, and their all, in well-doing, as unto a "faithful Creator," who is a tender Father, and will lead them on; and though He may see meet to exercise them with purging seasons, He will not administer one more than is necessary to bring about that state of purity and fruitfulness which the great husbandman designs. Mayst thou, my dear daughter, be encouraged to trust in that Arm of Divine mercy which thou has felt extended towards and underneath thee; though thou mayst at times be beset with doubts and fears respecting thy getting along, and be ready to adopt the language of one formerly: "Oh, that it were with me as in days past," when the "candle of the Lord shined upon my tabernacle." Well satisfied I am, that we are as much the objects of Divine regard in these seasons of discouragement, as in the highest we can attain to.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.



## CHAPTER XII.

ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO THE MEETINGS OF REDSTONE, SHORT-CREEK, SALEM AND SPRINGFIELD QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

ON the 24th of First Month, 1850, I left home in company with my dear friend, R. H. Smith, having the necessary certificate, to visit the meetings of Redstone, Short-Creek, Salem and Springfield Quarters, and to appoint a few meetings where there are no meetings of Friends.

Reached Westland on Seventh-day evening, 26th, and lodged at the house of George Smith.

Attended meetings on First and Second-days at Pike-Run, Centre and Providence. The two last were favored meetings, the former not so much so; though, I trust, it was a season of profit to some.

Third-day.--At Sewickly, which, through Divine mercy, was a good meeting.

Fourth-day.—At a Select Preparative, at Providence, to satisfaction.

Fifth-day.—At Monthly Meeting, in which heavenly good was graciously near, to the comfort of many. May the name of the Lord be praised, who alone is worthy.

Sixth-day.—At Select Quarterly Meeting at Redstone; a time of silent suffering.

Seventh-day.—The Quarterly Meeting for Discipline. The “unsearchable riches of Christ” was declared in a degree of that authority which Truth gives.

First-day, Second Month 3d.—Again at Redstone, public notice having been given. It was an open time in testimony. In the afternoon, at Westland, to satisfaction.

Set out on Second-day morning for Salem ; the weather being extremely cold. Reached the neighborhood of Carmel on Third-day evening ; and were at Elk-Run Meeting on Fourth-day forenoon, to satisfaction, and at Carmel in the afternoon. The notice not having been sufficiently extended, the meeting was very small, and not to that relief which was desirable.

Fifth-day.—At Middleton Monthly Meeting ; to the peace of my own mind.

Sixth-day.—At Select Quarterly Meeting at Salem ; in silent suffering.

Seventh-day.—The Quarterly Meeting for discipline ; to the peace of my own mind.

First-day, 10th.--At the same place ; in which Truth was in a good degree in dominion. The saints' rest was opened, I trust, in the " demonstration of the Spirit." May the Lord's name be praised.

Second and Third days, at Springfield.—O, the depth of the exercise of my poor soul ! on account of the disunity occasioned by the unsound doctrines introduced among us. May the Lord in mercy look down upon the low estate of his church ; and when, in his infinite goodness He shall see meet to say, " It is enough ;" may he " turn our captivity as the streams in the south ;" that our poor stripped and peeled Society may become settled upon the ancient foundation, to the glory of our God. I was enabled in a good degree, to throw off the weight of the exercise resting upon me, for which I feel thankful.

Fourth-day morning, set off for the settlement of Friends in George County, and attended a meeting there the next day ; a number of the neighbors came in, and a heavenly meeting we had.

Sixth-day.—Had another meeting at a Friend's house, to the relief of my own mind.

First-day, 17th.—At Kendal; and the next day at Marlborough and Lexington, in both of which my mind experienced relief.

Third-day.—At Goshen, and Springfield—favored meetings; particularly the former. The glorious gospel of Christ, which is the “power of God unto salvation,” was opened in the “demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”

Fourth-day.—At Monthly Meeting at Salem, to my own peace. I was led in a close manner to address parents on the right training up of their children, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; with warning to them not to indulge them in things inconsistent with the plainness of our profession.

Having felt my mind drawn towards the inhabitants of the town, I had a meeting appointed that evening at early candle-light, which was largely attended; wherein the doctrines of the gospel were opened in the “demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” May the praise be given to the Lord our God.

At New Garden Monthly Meeting on Fifth-day; the necessity of recurring to first principles, and to “stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein,” was set forth; and I was favored to leave in peace.

Sixth-day.—At Sandy-Spring Monthly Meeting, to satisfaction; and at an appointed meeting at Augusta the next day, which was a laborious meeting, in consequence of a divided state of feeling occasioned by the lack of a testimony against the unsound writings heretofore alluded to.

First day, 24th.—At Salineville, to satisfaction; and thence home to our own Quarterly Meeting.

Left home again on Seventh-day morning, the 2nd of Third Month, to finish my visit. At Mount Pleasant on First-day, at the usual hour. My mind was clothed with mourning on account of the low state of the church; but found relief in endeavoring to stand in the obedience of faith in communicating that which appeared to be my duty to do. In the afternoon, at the Boarding School, to satisfaction.

At Concord; the line of public service ran pretty close, commencing with the Scripture language, "How much owest thou unto thy Lord," showing how many blessings and favors we have received of the Lord; and how, like poor bankrupts, we have nothing to pay with. That if a due sense of our poverty, and of the much we owe unto our Lord were felt by us, we should be very careful how we censured one another, but would rather cast the mantle of charity over the failings of others, and be disposed to place a favorable construction on the conduct of our brethren and sisters, where it would admit of it.

Third-day.—At Short Creek, which was small. On account of the existence of disunity, many of the members were not there. But the Lord was with us and comforted our hearts together. May his great and holy name be praised, saith my soul.

Fourth and Fifth-days.—Were at Smithfield, and Cross-Creek, both of which were small, and that disunity before mentioned, mournfully to be felt; but I was favored to find relief in attending to apprehended duty. Our kind friend, Nathan P. Hall, being our pilot, we rode to his house near Harrisville, and lodged. After retiring to bed I slept comfortably until the latter part of the night, when, on awaking, the love of my heavenly Father filled my heart, and earnest breathings went forth unto

Him on behalf of his afflicted church; and many of her members were brought one by one to my remembrance, in prayer for their preservation, as well as for my own soul, and that of my dear partner in life. O Lord! thou knowest that, however feeble my efforts have been; and many weaknesses, and shortcomings attending; yet I have endeavored to serve thee "with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind." O, keep me in the low valley of humiliation! and enable me to "finish my course with joy, and the ministry which" has been committed unto me.

Sixth and Seventh-days.—At Harrisville and West Grove, to satisfaction; and First-day, 10th, at Flushing; which was a favored meeting. Dear A. B. had acceptable service. The line of gospel ministry ran forth freely.

Second-day.—At Freeport and Guernsey; both favored meetings, particularly the latter. May the praise be ascribed unto the Lord of heaven and earth.

Third-day, 12th.—Returned to our dear families with thankful hearts for the many favors and blessings conferred upon us, not only in preserving us as to the outward, from the dangers of travelling through inclement weather, but also in strengthening us for the allotted portion of service; the present being a day in which the dedicated followers of the Lamb have often to go mourning on their way on account of the disunity which has been occasioned by the publication of unsound views relative to the doctrines of our Society, by some under our name.

Found my dear family well: may the name of the Lord be praised, saith my soul.

Letter to D. P.:—

Second Month 9th, 1851.

Dear friend D. P.:—Thine of Ninth Month last came

to hand a short time since ; and though from one, who is, as to the outward, an entire stranger, it was none the less acceptable ; the reading of which revived in me a sentiment long entertained ; that as the members of our Society are faithful to their God, they will speak the same language, wherever located, having one and the same blessed and glorious cause in view, even the spreading of the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth in that way which has been opened to us ; and which our Society in its more pure and primitive days ; so clearly saw, and so faithfully adhered to.

Truly I can, in my measure, appreciate thy feelings in regard to our beloved Society ; having been favored as we have with evident marks of the goodness and mercy of our heavenly Father in gathering us to be a people ; who opened to our forefathers the spiritual nature of the gospel dispensation ; and has from age to age watched over, and preserved his heritage from the snares of the enemy, which have at times been very cunningly laid to lead us into a compromise of the plain unsophisticated views of primitive Quakerism ; and to fritter down some of the very important testimonies, which are, and always have been binding upon us as a people ; every part and parcel of which had their origin in the Truth.

Many who are " waiting for the consolation of Israel," are often bowed very low because of these things, whose petitions are put up at times to the Lord of Sabaoth, that He would by his overruling power remove more and more from our borders this compromising spirit that loves the world's embraces, and would fain shun the cross of Christ ; that He would clothe us individually with a portion of that living, upright zeal, which was so conspicuous in the



early gathering of our Society; that the Church might again appear in her ancient beauty.

May we keep to our individual exercises, looking unto Him who is able by his all-powerful word to control the boisterous elements, and bring about the purposes of his own will in the purification of his people. And may we not take comfort in the saying of our holy Redeemer: "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto Him; I tell you that He will avenge them speedily."

There is a heavenly cement that binds together the living members of that body of which Christ Jesus is the Head; the savor of a portion of which I felt rejoiced in believing was conveyed through thy quill. Many waters cannot quench it; distance cannot part asunder, nor destroy its heavenly virtue upon those who are of congenial spirits,—united unto Christ, and brought into that oneness which is of Him. They truly are as "epistles written in" one another's "hearts, known and read" in the light of the Lord, to their great comfort; and under the fresh anointing they can feel for one another, reciprocating the language: "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee, send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion."

I thought I felt a freedom to pen a few lines expressive of my cordial reception of thine, together with some of my views and feelings respecting the state of our beloved Society, the best interests of which lie near to our hearts.

\*

\*

\*

\*

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

## CHAPTER XIII.

ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO SOME OF THE MEETINGS OF PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING; APPOINTED SOME MEETINGS IN NEW ENGLAND, AND IN SOME OF THE SEAPORT TOWNS.

HAVING felt my mind drawn to visit in gospel love some of the meetings of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, and also to appoint some meetings in New England, and in some of the seaport towns, I set off (my dear wife bearing me company to St. Clairsville), the 12th of Fourth Month, 1851. My dear friend, Ralph Cowgill, who expected to accompany me, was taken with apoplexy on the morning of the day previous to setting off, and died at nine the same evening, which was a great trial to me. I spent some time with the family next morning before meeting, and then took a solemn leave of my dear wife and daughter, and several other Friends, and proceeded to Philadelphia. I attended the Yearly Meeting, which was a favored season, and closed on Sixth-day, the 25th. Went next day to see our dear friend, Christopher Healy, who was very low, but green and bright in spirit, saying: "I feel no condemnation, but am waiting,—patiently waiting until my change comes." A great comfort to be with him. Attended the Falls Meeting on First day, to satisfaction, and returned to the city on Second-day. Attended Monthly Meeting for the Northern District; also the Southern, and that of Arch street, as they came in course, to the relief and peace of my mind.

On Sixth-day, the 2d of Fifth Month, I left for New England, in company with my dear friend, Moses Bailey,

of Bradford Monthly Meeting, Pa, who had given up to the service; and we arrived at Westerly, Rhode Island, the next morning.

First-day.—Attended the meeting at Hopkinton, which was a favored meeting. A severe storm coming on, we were detained at the house of J. W.

Third-day, 6th.—At South Kingston; strength was afforded to discharge the portion of service required. The word of encouragement flowed to the members of our religious Society to be faithful in keeping up their religious meetings. My soul has mourned over the devastating effects of a separating spirit, which has carried off very many from the ancient doctrines of our religious Society; in many places there being but few left.

Next, attended meetings at Warwick, North-Providence and Newport; all of which were seasons of favor.

Seventh-day, 10th.—At Fall River; the forepart of which was rather dull and heavy; but in the Lord's time, Truth arose into a good degree of dominion. "Praise the Lord, oh, my soul! and bow in humble prostration before Him; for He lifteth the beggar as from the dunghill, and putteth the song which is ever new into the mouths of his dependent ones."

Extract of a letter to E. B., written at this time:—

Fall River, Mass., Fifth Month 10th, 1851.

Dear friend, E. B.:—In the fresh feeling of that near unity, which has long been felt between us, I salute thee and thy beloved M., and may inform thee that I am well, and, through Divine mercy, have been favored to get along to my own peace thus far. \* \* \* The little remnant of sound Friends here are very glad to see us, to whom the language of encouragement has divers times

flowed freely, with the exhortation of our Divine Master :  
“In your patience possess ye your souls.” May I be kept  
in the line of Divine appointment ; and truly, it seems to  
me, that my soul has cause to trust in, and rely upon the  
good Shepherd, who has not been wanting in his merciful  
care in going before, nor in qualifying for the service He  
requires. \* \* \* I desire, on the one hand, not to  
hurry on too fast ; and on the other, not to stay longer  
than is right. \* \* \* I often think of my dear family  
and friends in our little meeting at home, with desires for  
their preservation and growth in the Truth ; believing  
that the truly exercised burden-bearers feel the weight of  
the exercise to be heavy upon them, their hands almost  
ready to hang down, and their knees to smite together ;  
but as they keep near unto Him, in whom is everlasting  
strength, being willing to suffer with the seed of life,  
which is under suffering in the hearts of many, even as a  
“cart loaded with sheaves,” they will be permitted, in the  
Lord’s time, to reign with Him. Oh, I feel very tenderly  
for these in my own little meeting at home. May the  
Lord, in his mercy, strengthen them by his power in  
their inner man, and so clothe them by his Spirit, both in  
meeting and out of meeting, that they may keep their  
places in the authority of Truth ; being as “saviours upon  
Mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau,” both in them-  
selves and in others.

In the fellowship of the Gospel I conclude, with love to  
thyself, thy dear wife and children, and remain,

Thy friend in the Truth,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

First-day, 11th.—At Westport, and North Dartmouth,  
to satisfaction. Then to New Bedford, and had an ap-

pointed meeting with the few Friends there, which was a season of instruction to many; divine life being felt to spread over the meeting.

On first coming into the city, my mind was turned in gospel love towards the seamen, which, being opened to my companion, and Friends, was united with, and a meeting appointed on Third-day evening. My mind was brought very low on account thereof, but was enabled to cast my whole care upon the Lord, with earnest breathings unto Him that He would be pleased to keep me in the hollow of his holy hand, and not permit his good cause to suffer by me. The meeting assembled at the time proposed, and though not so many of those of a seafaring life as was desirable, it was a quiet, orderly meeting. After a considerable time of silence, I arose with these words, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" pointing out the way whereby alone a knowledge of God and of Christ can be obtained, even by attention to his spirit in the heart, which will ever lead duly to appreciate the benefit of what has been done for us without us, as well as to submit to the working of his Spirit within us; and thus know Him to be our complete Saviour and Redeemer. Was favoured to leave peacefully.

Extract of a letter to his wife, written at this place:—

New Bedford, Fifth Month 13th, 1851.

My dear Wife:— \* \* \* I may truly say that I have been confirmed abundantly in the sentiment that I have long entertained, that the part of Society in this country, termed the "smaller body," is owned by the Head of the church. We have been with them greatly to our comfort in divers instances. On my coming among them

I greatly desired to be favored to feel where they were, and whether they were owned by my divine Master ; and I have been well satisfied in that matter, and may say with gratitude of heart ; thus far I have been helped to get along to my own peace, though I have had largely to partake of the cup of suffering ; but have been made willing to suffer with our dear Lord and Master. What a pity that so many of the members of our beloved Society should join in confederacy with that spirit which for years has been striving to modify our high and holy profession.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Fourth-day, 14th.—At South Dartmouth. Divine mercy was extended, to the tendering of many hearts. Set out for Nantucket, and touched at the Elizabeth Islands, and Martha's Vineyard, arriving safely at Peleg Mitchell's on Sixth-day evening. Had a meeting at Siasconset—a fishing town on the Island ; which, through the Lord's goodness, was a favored season. May He have the praise of his own works. Bow low, O my soul, before Him in humble trust, that when He putteth forth into service, He will be near, and carry through to his own praise !

On First-day forenoon, the meeting was large, and through the goodness of the Lord was a refreshing season. That in the afternoon, though smaller, was a good meeting. In both the Lord was near, giving ability to open the doctrines of the everlasting gospel, to the relief and peace of my own mind. In the evening attended a funeral of a person who had been a member of our Society ; and during the meeting at the house, the scripture language arose with an impression to communicate it, "No man hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit ; neither hath he power in the day of death ; and there is no discharge in



that war." Showing the great importance of accepting the gracious invitations of the Lord, which are heard in the secret of the soul: "My son give me thy heart; my daughter give me thy heart;" that we might know Him to prepare us for the solemn period of death.

Feeling clear of the Island, we took a solemn leave of Friends, in great tenderness, and embarked on a steamer on Second-day morning, the 19th, and had a very pleasant passage, landing in the afternoon at New Bedford. Took the rail-cars the next day for North Berwick, and had a meeting there, to satisfaction. Had a meeting at the Great Falls, which was an exercising time; but was favored to throw off the burden resting upon me, and felt a humble hope that the cause of Truth did not suffer.

Sixth-day, 23d.—Called upon several Friends, and my mind was led into deep sympathy with the burden-bearers, and the word of encouragement flowed freely to them during divers opportunities. May the Lord keep his own little dependent children in his holy enclosure, and make them "joyful in his house of prayer, and fruitful in his fields of offering."

Seventh-day.—At Salem, to satisfaction. Had an evening meeting for the sailors, which was a season of instruction.

First-day, 25th —At Lynn, in the forenoon. The meeting, though small, was a season of Divine favor. May my soul bless and praise the Lord for his many mercies. In the afternoon had a meeting in Boston among the sailors, which was large, and owned by our Divine Master. The doctrines of the gospel were opened, I trust, in the "demonstration of the Spirit," to the comfort of many, and proved a solemn meeting. "Return unto thy rest, oh! my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee!"

In the evening, walked out into what is called "Boston Commons," where several of our dear Friends suffered martyrdom, and contrasted, in my own mind, the great change of feeling since that day. May the Lord, who hath the hearts of all men in his hands, and can turn them at his pleasure, carry on his great and glorious work, until all cruelty and oppression, all war and bloodshed, may be done away, and the peaceable reign of the Messiah be more and more conspicuously ushered in, that the ancient prophecy may be fulfilled: "Nothing shall hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain."

Second-day morning.—Took the cars for Fall River, and had a meeting at Little Compton, which was an open, refreshing opportunity. Went back to Fall River, to the house of our kind Friend, Israel Buffinton. Many Friends coming in, we had a cementing parting opportunity.

Third-day morning.—Took boat to Providence, and the cars to Westerly. Had a meeting there in the evening, which, through Divine mercy, was an instructive season. May the Lord have the praise of his own work. Took leave of Friends there, and went on the cars to Stonington, where we took boat for New York, and had a very pleasant passage, but for one circumstance. Our steamer accidentally ran against a sloop, and rendered it unable to make its way. Our captain gave orders for it to be lashed to our steamer, to tow it into New York, which was accordingly done, and the men—except one—taken on board our vessel; but the sloop soon filled with water, and went to the bottom. A boat was hoisted out immediately and picked up the man left on the sloop. Oh, the hardships and privations of a sea-faring life.

Arrived at New York about 7 o'clock, and took the cars at Jersey City for Rahway, where we arrived in time to

attend their mid-week meeting ; wherein, through Divine mercy, strength was afforded to discharge the portion of service allotted ; setting forth the beauty and excellency of Divine worship, and that those who are inwardly gathered unto Christ, and to his Spirit, are at times favored to arise with the beloved disciple of our Lord, and “ measure the temple of God, and them that worship therein,” ever remembering, that the court that is without is not to be measured, but left unto the Gentiles.

Sixth-day.—At a meeting at Plainfield, which was a season of Divine favor.

My dear friend, Moses Bailey, with whom I have travelled in great unity, now feeling released, returned home, and my friend and fellow-laborer, Henry Wood, concluded to take his place.

Seventh-day.—Went to Shrewsbury by way of New York, taking a steamboat from thence, and arrived in the evening.

First-day, Sixth Month 1st.—Were at meeting there ; and my mind was clothed with mourning, on account of the low state of the Church. Several not members of our Society, came in, and the doctrines of the gospel were opened, I trust, in a good degree of its own authority. I was favored to leave in peace.

At Crosswicks Monthly Meeting on Third-day, to satisfaction ; and at Trenton in the evening, which was a time of renewed favor, wherein Truth reigned over all, Oh, that the praise may be returned unto Him to whom it is due.

Fourth-day.—At Springfield Monthly Meeting, held at Mansfield. The Truth was in a good degree in dominion, strength and utterance being given to declare the “ unsearchable riches of Christ,” in a degree of the “ demon-

stration of the Spirit and of power." At Burlington in the evening; a low, trying time. My soul mourns over the devastating effects of the disunity occasioned by the spread of unsound doctrines.

Fifth-day.—At Evesham Monthly Meeting; which was a season of refreshment to many.

Sixth-day.—At Rancocus in the forenoon; wherein Truth reigned over all. May the Lord have the praise of his own works. In the evening at Mount Holly, which was an instructive opportunity.

Seventh-day.—At Upper Evesham Monthly Meeting, in which Truth reigned over all, under the influence of which, the gospel was preached to the instruction of many. May the Lord be praised, and my poor soul kept in the dust, for He alone hath done it.

Extract of a letter to his family.

New Jersey, Sixth Month 7th, 1842.

My beloved Wife:—Thine of the 30th came to hand yesterday, which was truly acceptable. I was also glad to have a few lines from the dear children. I may inform thee that I am well; and have been thus favored ever since leaving my dear home, except some slight colds, which I esteem a great favor among the many which are bestowed. O! that I may never forget to return thanks therefor unto Him, who has in his abundant mercy been near, not only to bear up in seasons of deep baptism and trial, but to give strength to perform his blessed will. The former has been my portion in large degree; but blessed be his name he has given a supply of that excellent gift—patience; and thereby the bitter cups have been made more than tolerable. And as respects the latter, I can say, I have been favored to get along to the relief and peace of my

mind ; and what a favor ; when wading along under deep exercise ; being pressed out of measure, and beyond strength almost ; to be enabled to throw off the burden where it belongs ; whether the people will hear, or forbear. O ! that I may be kept inward with the Lord ; keeping a single eye unto Him, that nothing may be omitted that ought to be done, nor anything done which his holy Spirit does not lead into. I am more and more confirmed in the belief that if we are inward, watchful and fervent enough, we shall not be left to ourselves, but an evidence will be granted of any intimation of duty required.

I remain as ever thine,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

At Easton on Seventh-day afternoon, where the language of encouragement flowed freely to the exercised burden-bearers, as well as a tender invitation to the unconcerned to enter into exercise, and work out their salvation with fear and trembling before God.

First-day 8th.—At Cropwell in the forenoon : the meeting was favored with the overshadowing wing of ancient goodness ; under which heavenly covering the burden-bearers were encouraged to stand as with their feet firm in the bottom of Jordan until the people clean pass over ; that the service designed through them to the church might be realized ; and that they might experience the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls. The careless were tenderly invited to gather to, and obey God's gift in their hearts, that they might be enabled to do their day's work in the day time.

In the afternoon, at Haddonfield ; many not of our Society coming in the meeting was large, and that goodness which is both ancient and new was felt to be near,

solemnizing many hearts, and affording ability to declare the “unsearchable riches of Christ.” Let my soul forever bow before thee, O Lord! in deep prostration: thou knowest the deeps through which it has been my lot to pass; make me willing to bear them; yea, even to rejoice in being accounted worthy to suffer for thy great name’s sake; that I may more and more arrive at the situation in which I can adopt the language, “Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done.”

Second-day.—At Haddonfield Monthly Meeting held at Newtown, which was a season of divine favor.

Third-day.—At Chester Monthly Meeting; Truth reigned over all. The language of inspiration through the Lord’s servant, was opened and uttered: “For Zion’s sake I will not hold my peace; and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest until the light thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.” The language of tender solicitude flowed freely to different classes present.

Had a satisfactory meeting at Westfield in the afternoon, which was a season of renewed visitation to some. The faith and faithfulness of Abraham was adverted to in that memorable instance of his going to Mount Moriah to perform the command of the Lord; who again appeared unto him in the solemn and welcome language, “Lay not thine hand upon the lad;” and turning him about, saw a ram caught in the thicket, and he took it and offered it instead of his son.

Next attended Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting held at Evesham, which was a season of favor.

Sixth-day.—At Woodbury and Woodstown. The former was a season of favor; the way of life and salvation was opened in the demonstration of the Spirit. The latter was



a heavy, trying meeting, particularly the forepart of it. There being divers not of our Society present, for whose sakes, it appeared, the spring of life was a little opened; and some communication tending to stir up to faithfulness while the day of visitation is lengthened out.

Seventh-day.—At Salem; which, through the Lord's mercy was a heavenly meeting. May He be praised.

First-day, 15th.—At Greenwich—an open, good time.

Second-day.—Rode to Leeds-point, on the sea-shore; and had a meeting there the next day, which, though small, was a favored season.

Fourth-day.—At Tuckerton and Barnegat, to a good degree of satisfaction, which closes my prospect in New Jersey.

Attended the Meeting for Sufferings in Philadelphia on Sixth-day; and feeling my mind drawn towards the inhabitants of the city, particularly those in a sea-faring life; I felt most easy to acquaint my friends therewith; which being united with, way opened to hold a meeting on First-day afternoon, 22nd; to which many of that class came; and through divine mercy it was a solid instructive season. Set out the same evening for home, and arrived at the house of our son-in-law, John Thomasson on Third-day evening, 24th; where I met my beloved wife to our mutual joy and rejoicing. Arrived at my own home the next day; O, may my soul bless and praise the name of the Lord!

## CHAPTER XIV.

ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO THE MEETINGS OF REDSTONE,  
SALEM AND SPRINGFIELD QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

I LEFT home the 25th of First Month, 1853, having the concurrence of my friends at home, in order to perform a religious visit to the meetings of Redstone, Salem and Springfield Quarters. Arrived at Westland on the evening of the 27th. The next day, rode to Brownsville, and thence to Sandy Creek, among the Allegheny Mountains, where formerly there had been a meeting of Friends, but was discontinued. Feeling my mind drawn to have a meeting in that neighborhood, and our wishes being made known, the Methodist Society in a village near by, kindly offered their meeting-house, as also their meeting hour, for our accommodation. We accepted the offer, and a meeting was held on First-day, the 30th, which was largely attended ; and the doctrines of the gospel were opened, I trust, in the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power." May the Lord alone be praised for his own works, for they only can praise Him.

Second-day.—At Centre ; a time of renewed favor, the tendering love of God being felt in a good degree to prevail.

Third-day.—At Redstone and Westland ; both relieving opportunities. At Pike Run my lot appeared to be to set an example of silence.

Fifth-day.—At Providence Monthly Meeting, to satisfaction.

Sixth-day.—At the Select Quarterly Meeting ; and at the Quarterly Meeting for Discipline the next day ; which,

though a season of deep exercise, proved to be relieving to my poor, tribulated mind. May my soul bow in humble prostration before Him, who regardeth the afflictions of his people, and will, in his own time, "turn their captivity as the streams in the south."

First-day morning, 6th of Second Month.—Set out for Sewickly Meeting, notice having been forwarded of our expectation of being there. We were favored to arrive in time, which proved an open, relieving opportunity. May my soul always retain a lively remembrance of the goodness and mercy of my Divine Lord and Master.

G. G. going with us, we set out on Second-day morning for Salem, by way of Pittsburgh; and feeling something about a meeting there, our kind Friend, Frederick Maerkt, offered his house to hold it in. A number of the neighbors and serious people were accordingly invited; and, through the Lord's mercy, it was an open time. May He have the praise.

Reached Middleton on Fourth-day evening, and attended Monthly Meeting there the next day, where we met with our dear friend, Ann Branson. Ancient and everlasting goodness was near, solemnizing the hearts of many. The meeting closed in solemn prayer. May praise and thanksgiving be ascribed unto the Lord.

Sixth-day.—Attended the Select Quarterly Meeting at Salem; and the Quarterly Meeting for Discipline the next day; which was a favored meeting.

Had a youths' meeting in the afternoon of First-day, 13th, which, I trust, proved a time of renewed visitation to some. Deeply have I been led to feel for this interesting class of our Society, in this day of great liberty and liberty-seeking.

Second-day.—Attended the Select Quarterly Meeting

at Springfield, and the Quarterly Meeting for Discipline the next day. Deep suffering was my portion in both on account of the great disunity occasioned by the reception of unsound doctrines in our midst; but through the Lord's unmerited mercy, I was strengthened to throw off the burden of exercise which weighed heavily upon me.

Fourth-day.—Went to the settlement in Geauga County and had a meeting there the day following, which was a time of instruction to some. Ann Branson and company were there with us.

Sixth-day evening.—Had a meeting at Ravanna, to the relief of my mind.

First-day, 20th.—Had an appointed meeting at Middleton, to which many not of our Society came; and the everlasting gospel was declared in its own power. May the Lord have the praise.

Second-day.—At Carmel, where the blessed Master was pleased to qualify to declare the “unsearchable riches of Christ.”

---

From this time forward but little account of the life and religious labors of our dear friend appears to have been kept by his own hand; or, if so, it cannot be found. It appears, however, from the records of his Monthly Meeting, that he was liberated at various times to travel in the service of his Divine Master, within the limits of different meetings, in accordance with his apprehension of religious duty.

In the year 1853, after returning from the above described service, he was liberated to visit in gospel love the

meetings belonging to Short-Creek and Stillwater Quarterly Meetings.

In the Twelfth Month of the year 1855, he was subjected to one of the severest of earthly trials, by the removal of his dear companion and bosom friend from works to rewards. She had been a true helpmate to him, and tender wife; and great was their unity and harmony in their daily walks together for a term of over thirty-seven years, and his loss was, therefore, keenly felt, yet borne with becoming resignation.

Her illness was lingering; and ultimately assuming a neuralgic character, was very painful; even so extreme during the last few months of her life, as to produce spasms. She was favored, however, in great measure, to retain her faculties, and though one not apt to speak of her religious feelings, she at divers times uttered comfortable and instructive expressions.

Some months prior to her decease, being brought so low by internal hemorrhage that her recovery was despaired of, she remarked to her husband: "I thought last night I was almost gone, and I felt very peaceful. I have had an opportunity during the past winter to review my past life, having been frequently alone in my chamber; and although I am a poor creature, I have not been able to see anything in my way. I am willing to go." After this, however, she rallied a little, and for a time gained some strength, yet her sufferings continued; in the midst of which, she said she could adopt the language of the poet:

"There is mercy in every place,  
And mercy—encouraging thought—  
Gives even affliction a grace,  
And reconciles man to his lot."

In the progress of her disease, she became entirely blind, to which great privation and trial she was, through Divine mercy, resigned, saying: "I think I can say, I feel resigned to my situation." At one time, being asked how she felt, she replied: "I feel poor; but feel no condemnation." A short time before the attack, which in about a week terminated her life, she remarked: "I think nature must soon give way, and I am satisfied, and willing that it should be so."

She was firmly attached to the doctrines and testimonies which the Lord has required the Society of Friends to uphold; and labored in the sphere allotted her for their support. Being favored with a sound and discriminating judgment; through obedience to the requirings of her divine Master, she was qualified to take an active part in the administration of the discipline; and was instrumental in maintaining the cause of Truth, to the comfort and encouragement of Friends, and the benefit of the church.

In contemplating the removal of this dear friend, the Scripture language may be adopted, "Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God—an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

But to return to the religious services of the subject of this Memoir, we find, that in 1856, he was liberated to visit the families of Friends composing Short-Creek Quarterly Meeting; and in 1858, to visit the families of Sunbury Particular Meeting. In the Second Month of 1859, with the approbation of his Monthly Meeting, he appointed a meeting for the inhabitants of Barnesville; and in the



Fourth Month following, he felt his mind drawn to appoint a few meetings in Iowa, for which service he was liberated by his Friends at home.

Under date of Eleventh Month 12th, of this year, he thus writes to his dear friend, A. B.:—

Dear friend A. B.:—In the fellowship of the gospel, I salute thee, desiring for thee as well as for myself, the blessing of preservation in this day of accumulated trials and discouragements to all the living members of the church of Christ: for so it seems to me, it is, and has been for a long time: and, if it were not for a token of good now and then in mercy extended, what would become of them? These seasons are no doubt intended by Him who is “wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working;” to sustain through the trials which are permitted to attend their path; even as it was with the servant of the Lord in old time, when he laid himself down under a Juniper tree, and requested for himself that he might die; and as he lay and slept, the angel of the Lord fed him with bread and water, and he went in the strength thereof forty days; and when the Lord showed him that He had a service for him, his feelings were very much depressed; when he broke forth in the language; they “have thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets; and I, even I only am left; and they seek my life to take it away.”

The present stripped and peeled state of our Society is cause of much sorrow; but my dear friend, some of us, and I trust, a goodly number up and down, have been favored to see in the light of the Lord the necessity of upholding a faithful testimony against these innovations upon our doctrines and testimonies, which have been the ostensible cause of all our troubles. But when we do our duty and

no headway can be made, let us take comfort in the Scripture declaration ; “ The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.” If it were right for Friends to bear testimony against said innovations ; which I have never for a moment doubted ; it does appear to me, if right things were carried out, there would be a willingness to own such as have been contending for the same faith and testimonies, that we have. \* \* \*

But while I mourn over our present condition, I desire that I may be favored to do my duty faithfully ; and as it is my desire for myself, so it is for all the Lord’s faithful children. O ! it is no wonder if these feel something like that described by the Psalmist ; “ By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down ; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion ; we hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.” But as we keep our ranks in righteousness, whether a state of suffering or rejoicing be our portion ; in a day that is approaching we shall be accepted in the Beloved. That it seemed with me in the fresh flowings of my Heavenly Father’s love, to salute thee, and to desire thy encouragement, as also my own, in the service allotted us, believing that He who hath called us, still regardeth the low estate of his children ; and when He maketh up his jewels, “ He will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”

Oh ! blessed and praised be the name of Israel’s God for his abundant mercy, in opening to our worthy forefathers the beauty and excellency of this last and lasting dispensation ; and has opened, and does open the same unto us, as we walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing.

I am, as ever, thy friend in the Truth,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

In 1860 he visited Pennsville Quarterly Meeting, and most, or all of the meetings composing it. Also, in the same year, he visited in gospel love, the Quarterly Meetings of Salem and Springfield, and the meetings belonging thereto. In 1861, he visited the Quarterly Meetings of Redstone and Pennsville, and some of their branches; and in the latter part of the same year he performed a visit to the families of Friends of his own Monthly Meeting, so far as way opened.

In the First Month, 1862, he visited Pennsville Quarter and the meetings belonging thereto, as way opened for it; a short account of which is found in his own hand, as follows:—

Having felt drawings of duty in my mind, and having the concurrence of my friends therein, I proceeded, in company with my dear friend, E. Bailey, towards Pennsville, and arrived in the neighborhood on Fourth-day evening.

Fifth-day.—Attended Monthly Meeting there, which was, through the continued mercy of the Shepherd of Israel, a good meeting. May his great name be worshipped and adored who is forever worthy, saith my soul. And not feeling easy, I had a meeting appointed the next day, general notice being given, which was a favored time, the Lord's power being over all, and giving ability to declare the "unsearchable riches of Christ." Went that evening to our dear friend, William Dewees's, where we rested comfortably.

Seventh-day.—Attended Chesterfield Monthly Meeting, which was a time of instruction to many; also at the public meeting at that place on First-day, which proved, through the Lord's mercy, a heavenly meeting, and ended in thanksgiving and praise unto Him who "gave us the

victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." My mind was clothed with sweet and heavenly peace.

On Second-day, had a meeting at the house of our dear friends, Edward and Lydia McConnell, in a new settlement of Friends, not far from Plymouth. The meeting was much crowded, many being there who were entirely unacquainted with our Society; and through the Lord's eternal power, the way of life and salvation was opened to them, and the doctrines and testimonies which Truth led our forefathers into, explained, to the peace of my own mind. May the Lord be praised for all his works.

The following is an extract of a letter to some of his children, written near this time:—

First Month, 1862.

Dear children, J. and A.:—I have for some days past thought of writing to you, but being crowded with other engagements, it has been deferred until now. \* \* \* I often think of you in that far distant land, and earnestly desire your preservation on every hand; and I do believe, as you are rightly concerned to seek for Divine aid, it will be given you.

I sometimes, when in meeting, have remembered your little company, while tears have trickled down my cheeks, and mental petitions have been put up unto our Heavenly Father, that He might be with you, and strengthen you to keep your places individually to his own praise, and to your own peace; and I have had to believe, that if you act faithfully your part, He will keep you by day and by night, and nothing shall be permitted to draw you from that safe abiding-place spoken of in holy Scripture: "His place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure."

Our Meeting for Sufferings convened last Fourth-day at Stillwater, on the subject of the awful condition of our beloved country, involved in war and bloodshed : and upon a concern for the preservation of our members in a conduct consistent with our high and holy profession. A minute of advice was prepared to subordinate meetings, and to our individual members, and four hundred copies directed to be printed. I will send some to you when they are ready. \* \* \*

Your affectionate father,  
JOSEPH EDGERTON.

He again writes to the same, under following date, an extract being as follows :—

Seventh Month 4th, 1862.

Dear children, J. and A.:—We had the reading of a letter from you to-day, which was very pleasant, as you are often in our thoughts, as well as subjects of conversation, hoping, and desiring for you as for our own souls, the blessing of preservation ; for truly, the present is an awful day. Oh ! that all of us may, by watching unto prayer, be preserved from everything that would dim the beauty of Zion, or obstruct our own peace.

I often think of you, my dear children, and of the little meeting there, with a mind, at times, possessed of fears that you may not at all times hold it to the honor of Truth. But let me say to you, be not over-much discouraged at the smallness of your number, nor yet at your weakness and shortcomings, but let each one endeavor in that portion of living faith vouchsafed to you, to follow our Lord and Master, who will be “strength in weakness, riches in poverty, and a present help in the needful time.” I can say, my spirit is often with you, though far distant

in body. May the Lord bless you with the blessings of heaven above, and with that of the earth beneath, in such proportion as is consistent with his pure and holy will, that you may be enabled to "honor Him with your bodies and your spirits, which are his."

We lately went with our dear brother and daughter to St. Clairsville, and attended meeting there on First-day, which was very small, no doubt less than yours. \* \* \*

I conclude, with love to all, as though named.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Another extract of a letter to the same:—

Ninth Month 9th, 1862.

My dear children J. and A.:—Your truly acceptable letter came duly to hand. \* \* \* We often think of you in these awfully trying times; and hope you will be strengthened to keep your places, and uphold our Christian principles. \* \* \* It seems to me that the language of the Prophet Jeremiah to Baruch, is applicable to us at the present day, "Seekest thou great things for thyself: seek them not: thy life shall be given thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest." If we can be favored to witness our life given unto us, both spiritually and temporally; and can have bread to eat, and raiment to put on, we ought therewith to be content, and to be thankful to the great Giver of "every good and perfect gift."

How are you getting along in your little meeting? O! I often think of you in that far distant land; and my heart is frequently poured out in mental petitions to our Almighty Father in heaven, that He may keep you, and vouchsafe of his peace and Holy Spirit, to soothe and comfort you in your lonely situation; and to make you strong to bear all the trials that may be permitted to attend you



in this cloudy and dark day. I have learned from letters lately received that drafting will likely ere long take place there. If any of my sons should be of the number, let them always treat the government officers with due respect, and avow their conscientious scruples, and adhere to them; that as a Society we have always borne a testimony against war; and may the Lord strengthen you to uphold it to the honor of his great and worthy name. \* \*

From your affectionate father,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

We further find that in 1863 our dear friend again felt drawn to visit in gospel love the Quarterly Meetings of Salem and Springfield, and was liberated for the service accordingly; and in 1864 he visited the meetings composing those quarters: and in the same year he again visited Pennsville Quarterly Meeting, and the meetings belonging thereto; which is the last service of the kind we find any account of.

Two extracts of letters to his children written in this year, here follow:—

Fourth Month 17th, 1864.

Dear children J. and A. E.:— \* \* \* We often think of you and the rest of our folks in the west. O! how pleasant it would be to be near to you and to all our children, and be a comfort and strength to each other. You are now differently circumstanced from what you have been; mingling in a neighborhood of old acquaintance, many of whom, I trust, are desirous to be found living up to our high and holy profession. O! that it might be so with all in that land as well as in this; for many eyes are upon us, and if we could be favored to live up to

our profession, we should be kept within the holy enclosure, where no "evil could befall, nor plague come nigh." O, for this place of safety! the "munitions of rocks," where "bread may be given" us, and our "waters be sure." Even though we are an isolated body, not in correspondence with any other Yearly Meeting, yet his everlasting arm will be underneath for our support, as we are faithful to Him who hath called us to glory, and to virtue. \* \* \*

Your affectionate father,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Ninth Month 26th, 1864.

Dear children, J. and A. E.:—Yours of the ——— came duly to hand, and was acceptable, as it is always pleasant to hear of your welfare; and I may inform you that we are well; and although it will be a great trial to break up here, and leave friends and relations, and go into that far distant land, yet I have believed it would be consistent with the Divine will so to do; trusting in the goodness and mercy of Him who hath fed me all my life long unto this day, both spiritually and temporally. \* \* \*

Your affectionate father,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Having joined himself in marriage with Anna M. Brantingham, in the Fourth Month of the year 1857, as appears in the testimony of Somerset Monthly Meeting concerning him, they jointly requested, and obtained a certificate of removal for themselves and family to Coal Creek Monthly Meeting, Iowa, in the spring of 1865; and accordingly removed there in the Fourth Month of that year, believing it their duty to do so; but his sojourn amongst his friends and relatives there was of short duration; yet it appears he was frequently and fervently en-

gaged in the exercise of his gift, on their behalf, during the few remaining months of his life.

We find two letters, which were written during this time, extracts of which here follow:—

Iowa, Fifth Month 7th, 1865.

Dear children, J. and E. Thomasson:—Your very acceptable letter came duly to hand, and this may inform you that we are all well. We lodged last night in our own house, and you may suppose it was very pleasant to get to housekeeping again. \* \* \* The meeting-house to-day was about full, as it generally is on First-days; and I believe there is a goodly number of well-concerned Friends here; but on the part of many others there is cause of deep exercise, with which my heart has been clothed in rather a remarkable degree, and a door of utterance, with a measure of the heavenly unction, has been witnessed in labor amongst them, to my own relief and confirmation that our being here is in the ordering of Him whom I have been endeavoring to serve ever since the days of my childhood; though I have nothing to boast of but weaknesses and shortcomings.

My dear daughter E., I notice thy remarks touching thy own state, as being that of poverty and destitution.

\* \* \* And it is with me, dear child, to say: cast thyself into the arms of Him who knoweth the integrity of thy heart, and whom it has been thy desire for years gone by, to serve with “a perfect heart and a willing mind;” and although thou may have lingered a little behind for fear of going before thy Guide, and thus brought trouble and distress of mind, yet, dear child, remember thou art in very good hands, who is “touched with a feeling of our infirmities,” and as a “father pitieth his child-

ren, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." Thy dear father has trod the same path before thee, and can bear testimony to the goodness and mercy of our Heavenly Father; and if it be his pure and holy will that thou shouldst be engaged in declaring to others what the Lord hath done for thy soul, He will renew his visitations and enable thee to arise and acquit thyself in his pure and holy sight; and thus learning by the things thou hast suffered, be enabled to come forward in service to thy own peace, and to the benefit of the Church, as well as to the advancement of the kingdom of our dear Redeemer.

I often remember my dear friends at Ridge, and believe that the "everlasting arms will be underneath" all who are rightly concerned to follow their Divine Lord and Master. May they all be enabled to serve Him, for it may be truly said: "The harvest is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth laborers into his harvest." I do believe He hath come and hath called, and is calling, in an especial manner, to some, to devote their hearts more unreservedly to Him, which, if they would obey, Ridge Meeting would increase in the life, if not in number; though I do not intend to convey the idea that Divine favor has not been witnessed there. No; the remembrance of the many bedewing seasons witnessed at dear Ridge, humbles my heart, and causes tears of gratitude to flow freely. May He still continue to bless the little remnant there, and enable them, under a sense of the continuance of his mercy, to say: "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." So, in dear love to you and the children, I am, as ever,

Your affectionate father,

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

Letter to A. B. :—

Iowa, Seventh Month 21st, 1865.

Dear friend, A. B. :—We heard a few days ago of thy safe arrival at home ; and the feeling of love so pervades my mind, that I thought I might, in that liberty which the Truth gives, say, that thou wast often the companion of my mind during thy embassy to a foreign land ; and I did believe that thy divine Lord and Master, who called thee forth into that service, would be with thee, and keep thee in the hollow of his holy hand, and cause thee to witness the truth of that Scripture language : “ He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall, doubtless, come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”

No doubt, thou can say with thy poor correspondent, that there is grèat need of a deeper indwelling of soul before the Lord, on the part of many amongst us ; on which account those who are waiting for the consolation of Israel, like Simeon of old, are often bowed down, and can adopt the language : “ Spare thy people, O Lord ! and give not thine heritage to reproach,”

Oh, there is need for Friends to keep their ranks in righteousness, and not be drawn aside from a faithful, upright maintenance of the doctrines and testimonies which have distinguished the living members of our Society from its first rise to the present time. I see no reason why Friends should now desert the cause, or in any way connive at these departures from primitive Quakerism, which was the occasion of the trouble that has been hanging over us so long.

I sometimes call to mind the circumstances of former years, when thy dear father was united with many of us in raising up a standard against the enemy, through whose

agency those unsound doctrines had been sown broadcast in our midst.

Although I feel the need of the prayers of my dear friends, that I may be kept in the line of Divine appointment, and be enabled so to "finish my course," and the little gift of "ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus," as to win the prize; yet I can say, I often feel longing desires for my dear friends with whom I have been associated many years, some of whom are as bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh in the heavenly kindred, that they might be "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that their labor is not in vain in the Lord." Thou knowest, dear friend, that there are many things to discourage the faithful followers of the Lamb; but we may remember, that He, our ever-living and compassionate Redeemer, is "touched with a feeling of our infirmities," and is able to succor us under all our trials, both of flesh and spirit.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.

In the Tenth Month following the above writing, our dear friend was taken dangerously ill, and departed this life on the 30th of the same; a special account of which is contained in the following Testimony of Somerset Monthly Meeting concerning him.



## CHAPTER XV.

## TESTIMONY OF SOMERSET MONTHLY MEETING.

At Somerset Monthly Meeting,  
20th of Fourth Month, 1871.

A Testimony concerning our late beloved friend Joseph Edgerton, was read to our edification; which is directed to be forwarded to the Quarterly Meeting.

JAMES EDGERTON, } *Clerks.*  
ELIZABETH LIVEZEY, }

At Stillwater Quarterly Meeting,  
31st of Fifth Month, 1871.

A Testimony concerning our late beloved friend Joseph Edgerton—approved by Somerset Monthly Meeting—was produced and read, and directed to the Meeting for Sufferings.

ASA GARRETSON, } *Clerks.*  
HANNAH TATUM, }

---

 TESTIMONY.

It is instructive and encouraging to those who are passing through the trials and conflicts incident to a life of self-denial, and the daily cross; to have held up to their view the upright walk, and consistent example of those who have trodden a similar path before them; and who now rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

We believe it is due to survivors, and succeeding generations, thus to commemorate the goodness and mercy of

our God in his dealings with his dependent children, who have endeavored to follow Him in the way of his requirements, if haply others may be induced to give in their names to serve the Lord, and to come forward under the operation of his humbling and preparing power ; and be enabled thereby to dedicate their time and talents to the promotion of his great and glorious cause of truth and righteousness in the earth.

This, our dear friend, was born on the 10th day of the Ninth Month, 1797, in Wayne County, North Carolina. His parents, James and Sarah Edgerton, were members of our religious Society ; and concerned to train up their children as consistent Friends : and their conscientious, watchful care appears to have been blessed to them.

In a memorandum dated Fourth Month 1st, 1836, he says : “ The remembrance of their pious and watchful care over their numerous family, is fresh with me at this day ; frequently calling them together to wait upon God in silence for his holy help ; and this, though at times in great weakness, as I well remember hearing my dear father say, was blessed to us.”

Very little account is left us of his early years ; but there is good ground to believe that he was in a good degree, mercifully preserved from the many evils which abound in the world, and strengthened to dedicate the prime of his life to the cause and service of his dear Redeemer.

In the year 1818, he was married to Charity, daughter of John and Miriam Doudna, and settled within the limits of this meeting, where he continued to reside until a few months before his decease. In this connexion he found a true help-meet in his varied and deep baptisms. who gave him up freely to the service to which he was called.

In the twenty-fourth year of his age, he first appeared as a minister; but being naturally of a very diffident disposition, he endured many conflicts, the enemy seeking to cast down, and thereby destroy the good work thus begun; and for several years he struggled on, under much discouragement. But He who is all-sufficient for his own work, and sees and knows the secrets of all hearts, saw that his disobedience was through weakness and fear, instead of wilfulness, and eventually made "the depths of the sea a way," and enabled him to overcome and rise above the discouragements and suggestions of the destroyer, and come forth in the work whereunto he was called.

He was acknowledged a minister by Somerset Monthly Meeting in the year 1833, and travelled extensively in that capacity a great part of the time during several subsequent years; being drawn in gospel love to labor in all the Yearly Meetings on this continent, and was frequently engaged under the same constraining influence to visit meetings and families within the compass of his own Yearly Meeting.

Thus devoted to the cause and service of his divine Master, he was enabled to leave all and go forth, not doubting but He who had graciously promised to take care of those left behind, would be near to perform. But when a release was granted, and he permitted to return from the field of labor abroad, and share in the domestic duties, he was diligent in business, "laboring to provide things honest in the sight of all men."

He was an affectionate husband, a tender and indulgent father towards those objects of tender solicitude committed to his trust, earnestly desiring, that as they grew in years, they might experience a growth in grace—might "take root downward, and bring forth fruit upward."

The love and unity that should subsist among brethren, lay very near his heart, and he was frequently led to rehearse in the hearing of his friends, the language of the Psalmist: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore."

His countenance in meetings manifested a weighty concern of mind for the arising of the well-spring of life in those assembled for the solemn purpose of Divine worship. He was valiant for the Truth; standing forth in unflinching support of the doctrines and testimonies as promulgated to the world by our worthy predecessors. The cleansing, purifying power of the Lord Jesus, in his inward and spiritual appearance in the heart, he was frequently led to bring to view, and to bless and magnify the name of the Lord for this unspeakable gift, as "a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty unto the residue of his people," as a fundamental doctrine of the Christian church.

In the Twelfth Month of 1855, in the ordering of Divine Providence, his beloved partner in life was removed from works to rewards; and though this was felt by him to be an afflictive bereavement, yet the firm belief that she had exchanged a scene of suffering and sorrow for one of joy and peace, sweetened the bitter cup, and he was mercifully sustained at that trying time.

In the Fourth Month, 1857, he was married to Anna M. Brantingham; and in the Fourth Month, 1865, under an apprehension of duty, they removed to Coal Creek Monthly

Meeting, Iowa. But his sojourn among his friends there was of short duration ; yet he was frequently and fervently engaged on their behalf during the few months allotted him.

He was taken ill about the 17th of Tenth Month, 1865 ; but for several days no serious apprehensions were entertained as to the result. The symptoms becoming more alarming, medical advice was obtained ; but the means used did not arrest the disease. Observing the anxiety of his wife, he said : " I want thee to be comforted. I have not seen that this is to be my last illness ; but desire to rest in the will of the Lord."

On Fourth-day morning, he thought he was better ; but the night following, the symptoms were more unfavorable. On seeing the concern manifested by those around him, he said : " Be patient, and trust in Divine mercy." During his illness he several times said : " My dear, we are under the protecting care of a merciful Caretaker, who is worthy to be trusted in."

Fifth-day, he was much worse, and suffered exceedingly ; but not a murmur escaped his lips, though evident to those about him that his bodily suffering was extreme ; yet the serenity and composure of his countenance evinced that his mind was centred on heaven and heavenly things.

On Sixth-day night, being asked how he was, he answered : " Pretty comfortable." It was rejoined, " Thou art suffering in body, but comfortable in mind." He replied, " Yes ; I never felt more comfortable in my life."

On Seventh-day ; the physician informed him that his recovery was considered doubtful. He calmly replied, " I can say, the will of the Lord be done." On a letter being written to some of his absent children, he was asked whether he had anything to say to them. He answered,

“Not now. My children have not to wait till this late period to know my mind concerning them.” Addressing his wife, he said, “I want thee to let thy dependence be on the Lord. I feel for thee all that a beloved husband can feel.” He requested the seventh chapter of Luke read, which relates the circumstance of the woman washing the Saviour’s feet with tears, and wiping them with the hairs of her head. He said, “Oh, He is a dear Saviour ! one that we ought to love and serve all the days of our lives. We cannot devote too much of our time or our faculties to his service.”

His concern for his children and friends, was that they might be faithful, and let none of the precious testimonies of this Society fall to the ground ; remarking : “There are many manifesting so little concern for themselves and their children.”

First-day morning, he repeatedly enquired the time of day ; and said, “I do not want any one to stay from meeting that can go. We will have our meeting here.” After the reading of a psalm, he addressed such of his children as were present, in a very impressive manner, saying, “I leave it as my dying testimony ; and I wish to impress it upon you, not to let any of the doctrines and testimonies that were committed to this people in the beginning, fall to the ground. I want you to be plain in your houses ; plain in your dress, and plain in your diet ; be watchful over your dear children ; bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is the duty of parents to pray for their children : and it is the duty of children to pray for their parents : ‘pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks :’ seek to know from whence all true prayer comes, for what comes from God will draw to God. When you rise in the morning, turn your minds



inward to the Lord before entering upon the duties of the day. I want you to be as way-marks to others."

To some young people who were present, he had considerable to say in regard to their dress, conduct, and conversation; and divers times expressed the desire that our lives and conversation might be such as to bring glory to God. At one time he repeated the language of the apostle, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ," &c.—and again, "Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

He travailed in spirit for the welfare of his friends whilst in health, and in sickness it was not abated; still assuring them that if they were engaged to put their trust in Divine Mercy, they would witness the "everlasting arms" to be round about, and "underneath," for their support and preservation.

The words, "Glory! Glory! Glory! come, Lord Jesus, come," were among the last that were distinctly understood; and soon after passed away like one falling into a sweet sleep, on the 30th of Tenth Month, 1865; leaving his friends the consoling belief that he has entered into the mansions of everlasting rest and peace.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## ADDRESS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

*At the Meeting for Sufferings of Indiana Yearly Meeting, held at White Water, near Richmond, Wayne County, Indiana, Ninth Month 27th, 1841.*

A copy of the following Address to the Members of the religious Society of Friends, by Joseph Edgerton, was received from the Meeting for Sufferings of Ohio Yearly Meeting, and a minute of that meeting, stating that the address had been examined and approved. The address thereupon was read, and satisfaction and unity with it was expressed. It was proposed and united with that five thousand copies be printed for the use of the members of our Yearly Meeting.

Extracted from the minutes.

THOMAS EVANS, *Clerk.*

---

ADDRESS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

Dear Friends and Brethren:—In that love and life wherein is our union and fellowship in Christ Jesus our Lord, I salute you, desiring that He may enrich you with his heavenly blessings, and enable you to stand fast in that liberty wherewith his disciples are made free. So will ye answer the end for which our religious Society was gathered together in the beginning, by bearing as an ensign before the nations, a testimony to the peaceable

reign of the Messiah, and to the spiritual nature of his glorious gospel.

As a living, upright zeal is daily maintained for our own growth in grace, for the promotion of the cause of truth and righteousness on the earth, and for the glory of God, we shall feel that we have abundant cause to bless and praise his holy name for accounting us worthy to receive such tokens of his gracious regard as have been extended to us as a people, from one generation to another. When our forefathers, through a powerful visitation from on high to their souls, were drawn from the lifeless forms and ceremonies that had crept into the Church during a long night of apostacy, and in a true hunger and thirst after righteousness, met together in small assemblies, reverently to wait upon Christ Jesus, the true Teacher of the children of men, they found to their great comfort that which they sought after. The Lord gave them to see the unsatisfying nature of a man-made ministry, and to understand that under this glorious gospel dispensation, it was a prerogative that Christ had kept in his own hands, who is head over all things to his Church, to raise up and qualify his own ministers, each of whom must acknowledge with the Apostle, in regard to the gift bestowed upon him: "I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."\*

Through the teachings of the Holy Spirit, our forefathers were led into that plain way of worship, which has distinguished us as a religious Society from that day to this. The Lord was with them, and wrought mightily for them; and notwithstanding the persecutions they suffered at the hands of wicked and unreasonable men, their number greatly increased. In a short time many able

\* Galatians i. ch. 12 v.

ministers were raised up among them, who went forth to and fro with the glad tidings of the gospel of peace and salvation; and visited souls, who had been waiting for the consolation of the Israel of God, could, under a feeling of Divine favor, through them, adopt the language: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth!"\* These bold, faithful advocates, and valiant sufferers for the cause of Christ, were favored with a clear view of this last and lasting dispensation, and its spiritual nature and design; and very remarkable it was, that in their ministry, in their disputations with their opposers, and in their writings, they all spake the same language, and all advocated the same views of the doctrines of the gospel. This is a confirming evidence that they were illuminated by the one spirit, and thus in the mercy, wisdom and goodness of the Lord our God, they were brought forth under a special qualification to hold up a pure and perfect standard of Christian doctrine, agreeably to the Holy Scriptures.

Strong have been my desires that we may not become weary of that way of worship which we have learned of our Divine Master, nor yet of those scriptural views of the doctrines of Christ and his apostles, which have been believed in and upheld by this Society, from its first rise to the present day. Dear friends, the daily cross must be experienced, whereby being crucified to the world, we may be made to follow the blessed Captain of salvation in the straight and narrow way of self-denial. Then, with an eminent apostle, we shall be enabled to say: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet, not I, but Christ

\* Isaiah lii. ch. 7 v.

liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”\* As Christ comes to live in us, and to rule and reign in us, all that is high and lifted up will be laid low, and we shall become willing to be of no reputation, after the example of Him, “who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”† Thus, and thus only, can we answer the design of our Heavenly Father concerning us, steadily to maintain those testimonies, which He has made it our duty to bear to the world for his glorious name and truth’s sake, in this new covenant dispensation. It appears to me there never was a period, when the necessity was more urgent for us to be found at our posts; “Let your lights so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”‡ Let none be ashamed of a deep and reverent silent waiting in our assemblies, for a qualification to perform acceptable worship unto God, nor yet of our meetings that are held throughout in silence, when it is the blessed Master’s will that it should be so; but let us show that we believe in, and do experience the truth of his saying: “Without me ye can do nothing.” He alone hath brought us into the blessed lot of our inheritance, to sit under his teachings, who is indeed our great prophet, the minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord hath pitched, and not man. He hath brought us to feel the

\* Galatians ii. ch. 20 v.

† Philipians ii. ch. 6, 7, 8 v.

‡ Mat. v. c. 16 v.

sweet and heavenly harmony experienced by the true worshippers within the temple, who are gathered in his name, out of the world, out of its worship and ministry, and out of the activity of the creature. May we support unsullied this excellent testimony to the spiritual nature of gospel worship, and may the Lord by his divine power open more and more the understandings of the children of men, to come to partake of the blessed fruit thereof, "For, from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering."\* As we are faithful, our ever-adorable Head will still continue to bless the provision of Zion, and satisfy all her poor with bread, and by his Divine presence He will cause our religious assemblies still to continue to be holy convocations unto Him, and to the rejoicing of the Israel of God.

Many have been the exercises of my mind for several years past, because of a spirit that in some parts of the Lord's heritage, is exalting itself above the cross of Christ. It is a spirit which is delusively deceptive, and would insinuate that the doctrines which have been believed in and upheld by us ever since it pleased the Lord to gather us to be a people, are involved in mysticism, and that our worthy predecessors were not clear in their understanding of Christian doctrine. Be aware, dear friends, of this spirit, and of those who are actuated by it; for it is manifest, and will more and more appear that they are in the mixture, and their vision is not clear. They have not experienced the efficacy of the one baptism, which cleanses from all defilement, and brings into the situation of little children depending upon their Heavenly Father for sus-

\* Malachi i. ch. 11 v.



tenance, for strength and ability to follow Him in the way of his holy commandments, to his honor, and their own present and eternal welfare. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, and keep out all murmuring and complaining. Some for want of duly maintaining the watch, have in great measure lost that sense and feeling of divine things which they once had, and are very ready to find fault with the living, exercised members of the body, whose eyes are anointed to see the situation and danger they are in, and who, through the constraining love of the gospel are at times engaged to labor with them for their restoration, even as such who must give account of those over whom the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers. These complainers will cry out in language similar to some discontented spirits under the legal dispensation, "Ye take too much upon you."\* But the power of Truth is over them, and all the living members who keep their places in the body, by that living sense which they receive from God, are over them and all their murmurings. Oh, that such might submit to the teachings of Christ in their own hearts. This is the only way whereby such can be restored into the unity of the body, into the fellowship of the gospel, and into a living sense of divine and heavenly things. As any come upon this ground of faithful obedience, great reduction of self will be experienced, and their dependence will be entirely fixed upon the source of Divine light, life, wisdom and intelligence; Christ in them the hope of glory. Dear friends, as you search diligently with the spirit or candle of the Lord, you will find the root and cause of all your murmurings and discontent is within yourselves, and you will feel that in Divine mercy, the healer of breaches, and

\* Numbers xvi. ch. 3 v.

restorer of paths to dwell in, is waiting to be gracious to you, to bring you into the enjoyment of the heavenly life, and to know the flowing of the living sap from the true vine, in which all the faithful members abide, and wherein their unity and fellowship stands, agreeably to that beautiful simile used by our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit." "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me."\*

All the branches that abide in the vine, partake of the same life-giving sap; and the fruit brought forth by them is of the same good kind, to the praise of the great Husbandman. In this blessed and heavenly unity all the members of the body are strengthened to go forward in their respective services; and they know that there is no room for complaining, nor for any to say, because I am not the hand, or the eye, or the ear, I am not the body. The different members, feeling a portion of the same virtue, act unitedly, and rejoice or suffer together, as may be consistent with the will and wisdom of our ever-adorable Head. May this sweet and heavenly fellowship more and more spread amongst us, that those branches, which, having ceased to draw the due portion of sap from the living vine, are in a dry and withered condition, nigh to being taken away, may be restored to life. Then from living experience, such may adopt the language: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ."† May the Church arise from that wilderness

\* John xv. ch. 1, 2 and 4 v.

† 1 John i. ch. 3 v.

state wherein she has been long clothed as with a sable garment because of her backsliding sons and daughters, and come forth in that beauty that adorned her in the first breaking forth and spreading of this day of gospel light and power. Blessed, honored and magnified over all, be the name of our God, who is waiting to be gracious unto us, visiting us again and again by his Spirit, that all may come and partake of the waters of life freely.

Unto you, dear friends, who are sitting at ease in Zion, I have a word from my Divine Master, who is grieved because of your lukewarmness. He hath visited you by his day-spring from on high; He hath shown you the necessity of taking up your daily cross, and of following Him in his spiritual appearance in your hearts. But how have you slighted these visitations, not regarding the afflictions of Joseph, spiritually; endeavoring to satisfy yourselves with being members of a Society, that has been favored from its beginning hitherto. Oh, dear friends, let me warn you in the fear of that God, who has indeed been good and gracious to this people, as also to all the families of the earth, be aroused from this state of carnal security, and avail yourselves of the visitations that are yet extended to you. My spirit hath mourned and been in heaviness because of this abomination that maketh desolate, whereby so many are slain upon the barren mountains of Gilboa, where there is neither dew nor rain, nor fields of offering. Earnestly do I desire that you may return unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon you, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. Take heed to the teachings of his blessed Spirit, which teacheth us as it did the early Christians, "that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for

that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”\* As you daily live, and act, agreeably to these instructions, you will see the exceeding sinfulness of a state of forgetfulness of God, from whom we receive every blessing, both spiritual and temporal. Yea! the blind eyes will be opened, and deaf ears unstopped; the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing. You who have been lame and halting, as to a perfect and upright walking before God, will, through his eternal power, come forth, walking and leaping, and praising Him for his abundant mercies. As you love and cherish this humble and obedient state, the good Shepherd will lead you in the way that you should go, and reveal to you in his own wisdom the mysteries of his kingdom. Then with the saints of old, you will be able to say, “In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.”† A living, upright zeal as a garment will be your clothing; you will be zealous of good works, and faithful in the support of the testimonies which our blessed Master has made it our duty to bear in the sight of a wicked world.

Oh, remember how displeasing a state of lukewarmness was, in the primitive times, for which one of the churches received this severe rebuke: “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth: because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need

\* Titus ii. ch. 12, 13 and 14 v.

† Isaiah xxv. ch. 8 v.

of nothing ; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”\* This is the language of the same Spirit to you : “ I know thy works.” He knows your works, that they are but dead works. You go to meeting ; many of you come before Him as his people, and yet your hearts are far from Him, your minds roving upon objects very foreign from Him, or sunk into a state of stupor. Others cannot leave their farms, their merchandise, and employments, to meet with their brethren and sisters in a public acknowledgment of their dependence upon Him, who knoweth all the fowls of the mountains, and whose are the cattle upon a thousand hills. Every blessing that we enjoy flows from Him. Because of these things the Spirit is pleading with you in the language : “ I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed.”† Gold tried in the fire ; the fire of God’s jealousy is kindled in Zion ; his furnace is in Jerusalem, where all his children, both sons and daughters, are purified, and given to possess durable riches and righteousness, the righteousness of God, which is the saints’ clothing. May these things sink deep into your hearts, that through unfeigned repentance towards God, and a living faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, you may come forth in the beauty of holiness, showing forth the praises of Him, who hath called us to glory and virtue. “ Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down ; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams ; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.

\* Revelation iii. ch. 15, 16 and 17 v.

† Rev. iii. ch. 18 v.



For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; He will save us.”\*

You, dear friends, whose eyes have been blinded by the god of this world, as to the true spiritual vision, who have given way to a worldly spirit, and are eagerly pursuing your plans to get rich, and to make yourselves and families great in the earth; remember the visitations of a gracious and merciful Creator in the days of your tenderness, when by his good Spirit He showed you the danger of an undue love and pursuit of lawful things. Return unto Him who is, in unutterable mercy, still holding out the inviting language: “Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord, and heal your backslidings and love you freely.” My spirit travails for the welfare of Zion, and the enlargement of her borders, that we who are making this high and holy profession, may give a practical illustration of the efficacy of true religion on the mind, and show that we are redeemed from the world and an eager pursuit of the things of it. The apostle saith, “They that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition; for the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”† Experience has confirmed the truth of the declaration, even in regard to many who, in the days of tenderness, manifested religious concern; and who, had they continued therein, would have become serviceable members in the body. But by giving way to a desire to be rich, they have embarked in more extensive trade and business than they were able to manage, which has resulted

\* Isaiah xxxiii. ch. 20, 21 and 22 v.

† 1 Timothy vi. ch. 9 and 10 v.



in grievous failures, almost to the ruin of themselves and families, and to the reproach of our high and holy profession. Hence we see the necessity of attending to the limitations and directions of truth in our temporal business, which if sought after, will not be withheld. It is not with the wealthy and affluent only that this worldly spirit proves a snare; for the dealer in hundreds may as completely become its victim as the dealer in thousands. He that has but very little of this world's goods may be as fully carried away with it; may have his heart as completely set upon it, as he who possesses his tens of thousands. Therefore the injunction of our blessed Lord applies to all: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added."\* Then as the good things of this life are increased, the heart will be open and ready to communicate to the relief of the poor. As good stewards of the gifts of a gracious Providence, we shall not spend them in the gratification of our own carnal desires, but as those who must one day give account of our stewardship to Him from whom all blessings flow.

And dear friends, as we have seen clearly that we must not run in our own time and will, in the great duty of worship, so neither can we in the support of the other testimonies which are dear to us, and to the upholding of which the Head of the Church hath bound us. For in so doing we should be denying Him the right of being Head over all things to his Church. Merely having our eyes open to see the wickedness and abomination there is in the land, is not a sufficient qualification for us to go to work to remove it. Should such a course be pursued by us, it might and would fare with us as it did with some in the primitive days, who, desirous of working, presumed to call over him

\* Matthew vi. ch. 33 v.

that had evil spirits, the name of Jesus, whom Paul preached. But they were answered, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" And so the man possessed with evil spirits fell upon them, and they escaped wounded. So I have no doubt such as presume to run and act in their own way and time, will be wounded in the best life, and the precious cause of truth will not be advanced thereby. Our ancient and well known testimonies against slavery and intemperance, are particularly in my view at this time, and I rejoice that the Lord has prospered the work so far, and opened the hearts of the people so generally in the community, to see the iniquity thereof. These are subjects in which our religious Society has long felt a deep interest, and has travailed and labored therein, having first endeavored to clear its own hands. With gratitude, humility and fear be it spoken, the Lord hath made way for us, and given us a good degree of place in the hearts of those in legislative authority. The present is a day of great excitement on the subject of slavery, the evils of which we deeply deplore, both on account of the misery it entails on its victims, and the enormous weight of guilt that is attached to its supporters. Our blessed and holy Head is calling us to keep close to Him in a body, out of the excitement, the whirlwind, and the fire; where we may be clothed with that spirit which breathes "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."\* Dear friends for whom I travail in spirit, and for whom the Lord hath opened my heart, and laid upon me a necessity to write this epistle, keep out of the excitement, join not with the popular associations of this day of commotion, for if you do, instead of experiencing a growth in the truth, and bringing forth fruit more and more to the

\* Luke ii. ch. 14 v.

praise of the great Lord of the harvest, you will lose ground as to the divine sense and feeling He hath favored you with. Joining with those who do not believe in the immediate direction of Christ in such matters, and therefore do not wait for it, you will be very likely soon to become like them. As the prophet declared of Ephraim, "Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people," "strangers have devoured his strength and he knoweth it not."\* Thus you will be led on, it is to be feared, and violate other very important testimonies which have distinguished our profession from the first rise of the Society to the present day. Instead of forwarding the work by such mixing, we shall lessen our influence as a body, and I fear ultimately be found among those who retard the coming of that day when every bond shall be broken and the oppressed go free.

Dear friends in this righteous cause, may that living upright zeal that is of the Lord's own kindling, so influence all our movements, that it may manifestly appear that we are the followers of the Lamb, and under his peaceable government. Then we shall feel for our fellow-men of the African race, and whilst under divine direction and assistance, we pray for them that the Lord may visit them in their affliction, and that He may hasten their enlargement and final deliverance from the iron yoke of oppression, we shall also desire for the slave dealer and slave holders, that their hearts may be opened to feel the exceeding sinfulness of such a practice, that whilst a door of mercy is open for them, they may repent of their deeds and amend their lives. May the Lord of the whole earth, who hath the hearts of all men in his hands, and can turn them at his pleasure, so influence those in legislative authority, that their enactments may be promotive of the cause of

\* Hosea vii. ch. 8, 9 v.

freedom, and of the coming of the kingdom of his dear Son, when universal justice and mercy may flow as a river, and the day dawn when it may be said, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever."\*

And now, dear friends, it rests with me to make some remarks on the exercise of the Discipline. The great end and design thereof, is, that things may be kept decently and in order; that no reproach may attach to our holy profession; and that we may watch over one another for good. Where any, through unwatchfulness, turn aside from the footsteps of the companions of Christ, those members who keep their places, will feel it their duty to seek their restoration, agreeably to the apostolic exhortation, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted."† Here we find this great duty and service confided to those that are spiritual, that are under the government of the spirit of Christ. Such, indeed, will feel the weight of the succeeding language, "in the spirit of meekness, lest thou also be tempted." As delinquents are labored with in this restoring spirit of Christian love, though it may not at the time have the desired effect, yet I doubt not it will often prove like bread cast upon the waters, which will return after many days. And such as have been engaged in this friendly and Christian duty and service, as they have been faithful, receive a reward therefor. But oh, how important it is, that those who do step aside, should not suffer any wall of partition to get up between them and their best friends; those members of the body, who, under divine influence, are engaged to labor for their restoration. When hard-

\* Revelations xi. ch. 15 v.

† Gal. vi. ch. 1 v.

ness and bitterness are permitted to grow in individuals, they place themselves very much out of the way of help.

Seeing then that the work is the Lord's, that He only can qualify us rightly to support the discipline, let us look daily unto Him, that He may clothe us with his own spirit and strengthen us for every part of the service assigned, furnishing us with that wisdom which is from above; which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." I have no doubt but that the light and unfeeling manner in which the discipline in many instances has been exercised, has been an inlet to very great weakness in the church. Individuals have risen up, and obtained considerable influence, not from religious weight and feeling, but from good natural parts, and their quickness of understanding the letter of discipline, and are even sticklers too, in the observance thereof. Yet such not having experienced the one baptism, whereby all the living members of the body are raised from dead works to serve the living God, are a great hindrance in the good and necessary work of exercising gospel order in the church of Christ. Hence the great necessity of a deep and fervent exercise in these meetings. Those only who are spiritual, who are in a good degree under the government of Christ, can to advantage be made use of in restoring such as may have been overtaken in a fault.

And dear friends, as our meetings for discipline were first established by divine authority, for the preservation of good order in the church of Christ, it is only as they are held and maintained under the same influence that the blessed end can be realized. Hence we see the need there is for us in an individual capacity in such meetings, as well as those held especially for divine worship, to feel



the presence of our holy Head to strengthen us for his service. O, I have lamented that in some there is a disposition to move and act in their own time, way, and wisdom, whereby the standard is lowered, meetings are greatly injured, and the living in Israel burdened. Where the right authority is maintained, each member keeping in his proper place, looking to, and waiting upon our blessed Master, who is jealous of his honor, and will be Head over all things to his church, a divine and heavenly covering is often felt to overshadow and to bring into the oneness of spirit. Through this, such, whose business it is to speak and act publicly, are strengthened according to the sense and feeling they are favored with, to discharge their duty; whilst others by the inward weight and travail of their spirits, bear up their hands, and so the work is carried on in the unity, and life spreads and prevails. Then dear friends, let us strive together that our meetings for discipline may be held in that authority in which they were first set up, where the excellency of the wisdom of our great Head is seen and experienced, enabling each member of his body to keep in its place; for although there is a blessed liberty in these meetings, all having an equal right to speak as the renewed sense of feeling which may be afforded shall warrant, yet it does not follow that all should speak on a particular subject, but only as they may feel inclined by the Spirit of Truth; or at least have a freedom in the light so to do. Hereby we shall be preserved on the one hand from a superabundance of expression of sentiment, which has a tendency to carry off the weight of such meetings, and on the other hand from falling into a dull and protracted prosecution of the business, which is also a great disadvantage. As all keep in the life in that true authority wherein clear discernment is known, we



shall be favored to see how much is enough. Sometimes a very few voices on a subject leaves the meeting in a better situation than more. We should keep in the meekness and gentleness of Christ suffering no warmth of the creature to prevail, which brings distress in meetings, wounds those who give way to it, and grieves the spirit of the Lord. As there is an abiding in that which gives the dominion and preserves all the living members in the bonds of sweet and heavenly peace, due submission one to another will be our blessed experience, even in honor preferring one another. In the business of meetings for discipline, after we have given our views clearly, it is then our duty to leave it with the meeting, and cheerfully submit to its judgment, whether the subject makes its way in the minds of those present, according to our wishes or not. Thus the bonds of Christian fellowship are preserved, and in true dignity maintained, to the peace and prosperity of the church, and to the praise of her adorable Head.

Before closing this fruit of my unfeigned love, I feel constrained to address you, dear friends, in the earlier walks of life, to exhort you to faithfulness to the gift or spirit of God, that is given to every man to profit withal; which is a swift witness for Him against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, reproving therefor, and rewarding for well doing. This, dear friends, is the only way that a growth in grace can be known, or a knowledge of things spiritual and divine can be obtained, "for, whatsoever is to be known of God is manifest in man," by that divine light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. O mind and take heed to this light, and you will grow in grace, and in that knowledge which accompanies salvation. You will be favored more and more to see the beauty of holiness, and the excellency of that divine law

spoken of by the Psalmist, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."\* As you become willing to submit to this all powerful, heart-cleansing regenerating word, the simple will be made wise unto salvation, and their eyes enlightened by his pure and holy commandment, to see the mysteries of his kingdom, which is to be known in the heart, and therefore is not, "meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." "The fear of the Lord is clean enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."† O dear friends, as you become willing to be taught in the school of Christ, you will be preserved in his holy fear, which is clear and free from that slavish dread of man, by reason of which so many are ashamed to take up the cross and appear that plain self-denying people which is consistent with our high and holy profession. "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." Your understandings will be opened feelingly to acknowledge to the truth, "even more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honey comb; moreover by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward."‡ A blessed and heavenly reward is experienced by all the diligent, persevering and faithful students in Christ's school, and He will lead them forward from less to more, establish, strengthen and settle them, upon that foundation that cannot be shaken. O, dear young friends, for whom I travail in the spiritual life, be faithful to the Lord who hath

\* Psalms xix. ch. 7 and 8 v.

† Psalms xix. c. 9 v.

‡ Psalms xix. c. 10 and 11 v.

bought you and all mankind with the price of his own precious blood. We are, therefore, not our own, but his, and ought to live unto Him, and glorify Him with our bodies and our spirits which are his. As this is the case you will, from settled conviction in your own minds, become faithful testimony bearers, be a great strength and comfort to your elder brethren and sisters, who are bearing the ark of the testimony; yea, be one in spirit with them in our religious assemblies, partaking in that blessed harmony which the worshippers within the temple, those who are gathered out of the world, out of its spirit, out of its worship and ministry, and are sitting under the heavenly ministry of the minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, do experience. Then there would not be an ear open to hear the "Lo, here is Christ, or lo, he is there." Having seen and heard and learned of Christ the way to the Father, you will have no desire for any thing further.

You, dear young friends, who have, through the visitations of our Heavenly Father, made covenant with Him, by some sacrifice, my spirit travails that your faith and patience may be increased. Remember the exhortation of the apostle, that whereunto you have attained, walk by the same rule and mind the same thing. As a tender father, the Lord will lead on in the path of self-denial, the way of the daily cross, and your desire will be, that He may take the whole government of your hearts, turn his hand upon you, and purge away all the dross, the tin, and the reprobate silver. The prophet in allusion to this glorious Gospel dispensation and day of Christ, says, "He shall sit as a refiner with fire, and as a fuller with soap, and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and they shall offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Thus as you yield yourselves unto Him in his spiritual appearance in

your hearts, waiting daily upon Him, you will be strengthened to run in the way of his commandments and not to be weary, and walk uprightly before Him, and not faint. He giveth life and strength to his people, and his ways are ways of pleasantness to them, and all his paths are peace. It was the saying of an experienced servant of the Lord in former time, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth, he sitteth alone and keepeth silence because he hath borne it upon him, he putteth his mouth in the dust if so be there may be hope." All that have ever tried it have found it so. Those who bear the yoke of Christ, who sit alone and keep silence, in a deep and reverent sense of their own unworthiness, and of the goodness and mercy of the good Shepherd, will increase more and more in divine knowledge. So dear friends, be faithful and watchful, and obedient to the reproofs of instruction, which are the ways of life. This blessed Spirit of Truth is inviting you in this language, "Receive my instructions and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance, and the evil way and the forward mouth do I hate. Counsel is mine and sound wisdom; I am understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign and princes decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles, even all the judges of the earth. I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honors are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judg-

ment, that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance. And I will fill their treasures."

It has been a source of deep concern to me for many years, to observe so much latitude given to a disposition to get together into companies unnecessarily on the first-day of the week ; which day being set apart for our religious improvement, should be spent in a way that might conduce to our advancement in a life of piety. I believe that many on being thrown into such companies have lost that feeling of tenderness and religious concern which they once had, and have been led on in vanity and folly, until they have compromised the testimonies of truth in plainness of dress, and address, and finally have been carried away from our religious Society. I fervently desire you may be preserved in the Lord's holy fear, remembering the apostolic exhortation, "The end of all things is at hand, therefore be ye sober and watch unto prayer." Dear friends, as much as may be retire to your respective homes after your religious meeting on First-day, and spend the afternoon in pious reading and meditation upon the law of the Lord.

One thing more rests with weight upon my mind, and that is, to exhort you to be very careful what books you read, as the experience of many has proved the truth of the testimony of the apostle, "Evil communications corrupt good manners." I would therefore caution you to avoid those light and vain publications, the direct tendency of which is to lead away from God's law, and vitiate the mind, and increase a disrelish for divine and heavenly things ; as well as those which under a character professedly religious, yet have mixed up in intimate connection, sentiments at variance with the doctrines of the Gospel as



professed by us ; and are calculated to entangle and bewilder the mind, and obstruct a growth in the root of life.

In the first place I would encourage you to read the Holy Scriptures, which are a declaration of those things that are most surely to be believed, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works ; and are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. As they are a testimony of the things, and not the things themselves, but are in subordination to the spirit from whence they sprang, they are therefore to be received as such, read, believed in, and fulfilled, and He that fulfils them is Christ. The daily reading of these invaluable records, with the mind directed to their blessed author, is a source of much comfort and strength to the Christian traveller. Be diligent herein, not only in a collective manner in your respective families, but in a more private way, that you may grow in grace. Next to these read the approved writings of our religious Society, that you may be familiar with its history, and the different testimonies which have been upheld by us from the beginning, hitherto. Thus will you become acquainted with the upright zeal with which our dear forefathers were strengthened earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints ; and through which they themselves were enabled to overcome the world, and all the powers of darkness. By their patient and faithful suffering they show to us a practical illustration of the testimony of the apostle, " Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or the sword ? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am per-



suaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." In the end they were favored with a blessed assurance of a glorious immortality, and could adopt the language, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

As these writings in the usual way are scarce in many neighborhoods, I would recommend to your attention and perusal the Friends' Library, now in publication in Philadelphia, under the care of the Meeting for Sufferings of that Yearly Meeting; in prosecution of a concern which has rested for many years upon Friends in the different parts of this continent as well as in Europe. As it is a work calculated to be so eminently useful in the promotion of virtue and religion in the earth; I have desired its general circulation, and particularly that our junior members might, as much as may be, avail themselves of the opportunity of making it their own. For it will be a source of instruction and comfort to themselves and their children after them.

In conclusion, dear friends, the Lord, in his abundant, love, hath from time to time given us renewed evidences of his gracious regard, and particularly in delivering us out of many tribulations occasioned by those, who, for want of keeping under the daily cross, in a state of humility and entire dependence upon the good Shepherd, have gone from the life, lost that place and station they once held, and have become great enemies to the church. May the remembrance of these things sink deep into our hearts, and animate us individually to seek after and walk in the good old way, the way of faithfulness to our God: for truly

He is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. And this I have to say to you from Him, that as this people keep to first principles, walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing that they did in the beginning, no weapon formed against them shall prosper. But He will by his Almighty power still encamp round about, and shield from the fiery darts of Satan. Thus our Society, together with the testimonies which have been upheld by it, will remain, and generations yet unborn shall praise and magnify that God who hath wrought wondrously for us. "May the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory, by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you." To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

JOSEPH EDGERTON.













LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 022 015 888 3